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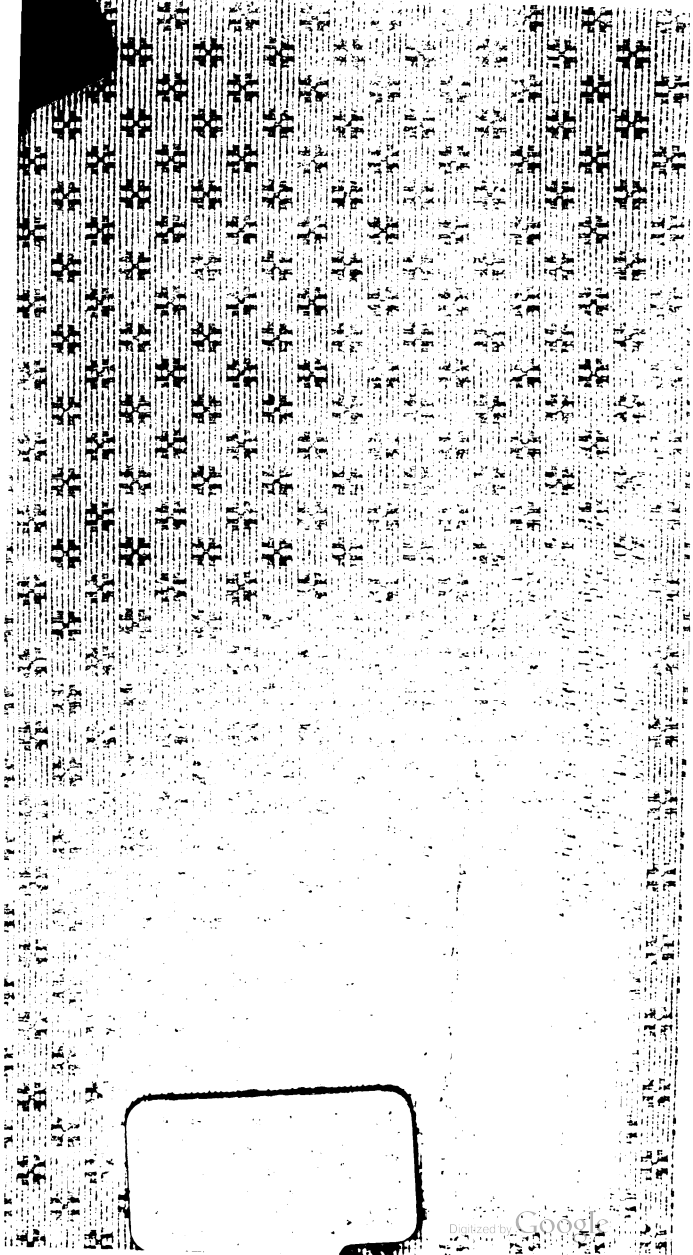
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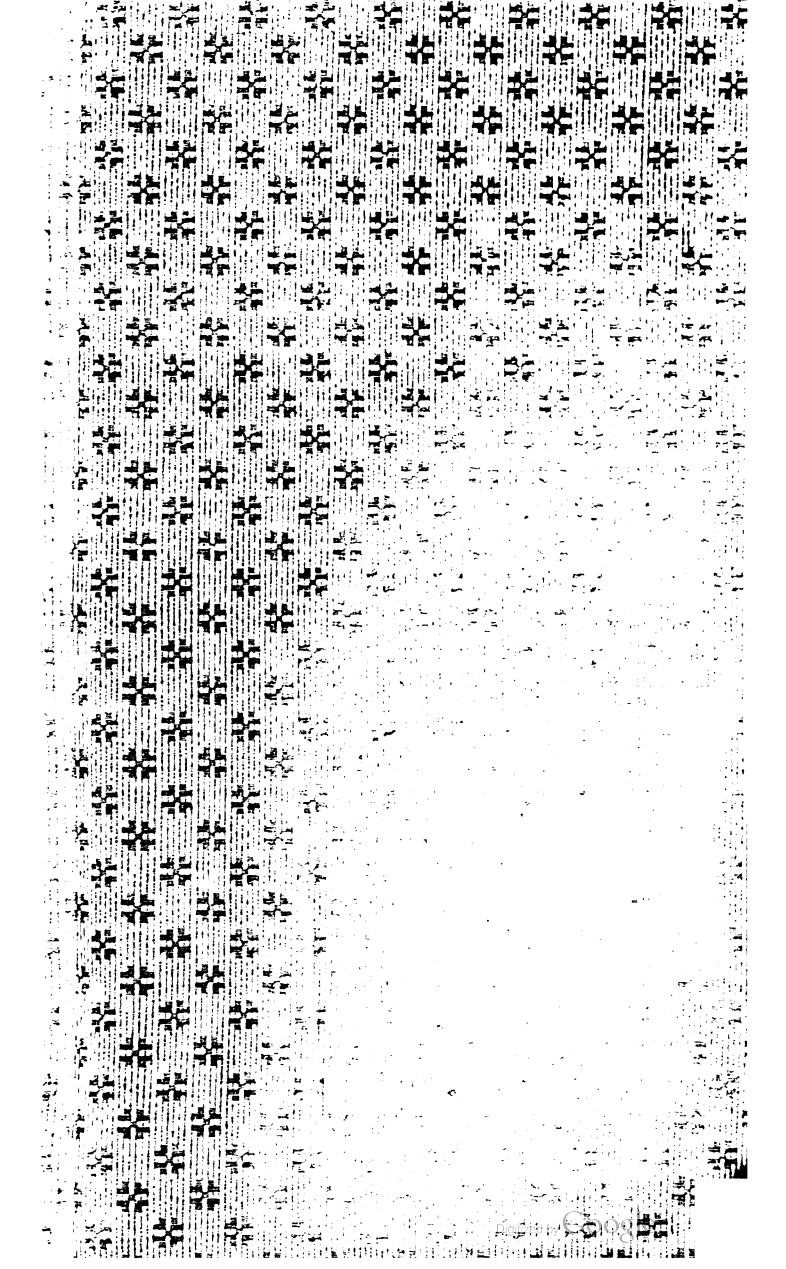
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HILDEBRAND
AND
THE EMPEROR.

Hildebrand

(POPE GREGORY VII.)

AND THE

Excommunicated Emperor.

A TALE.

By

JOSEPH SORTAIN, A.B.

Trinity College, Dublin



· Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey.

Wordsworth.

THIRD EDITION, REVISED.

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P R E F A C E.

SHOULD any one be disposed to object that, in writing a Tale, a Minister of Religion abandons his own proper province,—the Author of the following pages would beg leave to answer, that Fiction has been consecrated, as a vehicle of Truth, by the Divine Founder and Teacher of the Christian Church. The Parables, to all intents and purposes, proceeded upon the principle of grouping together homogeneous facts which, although they might have never occurred in such consecutive juxtapositions, had, nevertheless, severally transpired in human life.

Apart from this, as his general warrant, the Author has felt pain on observing how insidiously the "Stories" of semi-Romanists have obtained a reading from many who would never have been tempted within their influence, if the writers had confined themselves to a form more didactic. And it is with the humble hope that he may be able to meet them with less covert, if not equal weapons, that he thus seeks the attention of the public.

He would further beg leave to state, that for the origin of the plot,—for many of the scenes,—for suggestions various and most valuable, he is indebted to the historical knowledge and the discernment and the sympathy of his nearest relative. Without such aids, his professional habits would have presented difficulties insurmountable.

She, who has thus assisted him, unites with the Author in a respectful avowal of obligation to Sir James Stephen, for his article on Hilde-

brand, in the Edinburgh Review. They are both much mistaken if that article fail to place in the first class of writers on the Philosophy of History, one who has secured to himself the highest grade in the Science of Criticism.

The Author would trespass farther upon his readers to assure them, that, in the ensuing Tale, he has most conscientiously observed the facts and suggestions of History; and that the authorities which he has consulted have been principally Roman Catholic, both those friendly and those inimical to Pope Gregory VII.

It may also be desirable to state, for the sake of those readers who might be disposed to wonder at the language of Scripture which Hildebrand and others employ in the following pages—that, until after the Eleventh Century, the study of the Bible was not canonically forbidden to the Laity; and that all the Epistles of the

Pope, and all the Correspondence of his Clergy, are full, to overflowing, with citations and accommodations of the words of Holy Writ.*

* Gregorii VII. Registri s. Epistolarum in Mansi xx. p. 60, seq.—Joh. Voigt, Hildebrand als Gregor. VII. und sein Zeitalter, 1815.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

THE Author begs to say that, in addition to correcting some few typographical misprints, he has withdrawn one or two expressions that have appeared to him, upon reflection, to be undesirable.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE THIRD EDITION.

WERE it not that one of the leading organs of Tractarianism had charged the Author of the following pages with falsifying History, he would think it impertinent to do more than gratefully acknowledge the kindness of the public.

But this seems to him to be a charge too grave to be allowed to pass unnoticed; especially, as in the First Preface, the Author affirms that "he has most conscientiously observed the facts and suggestions of History."

The Author begs leave to trespass for a few

moments upon the attention of his readers, whilst he answers this allegation: he would, however, incidentally remark, that the bitterness of the Accuser is perfectly natural, for the organ, which he employs, is apostate.

In page 12, the Author says,—

“ Although ties of the most holy nature with wives and children had been ratified by the Church herself,—he (Gregory VII) cruelly, remorselessly, insisted on their disruption.”

On this the Tractarian critic observes :—

“ Now just five centuries before the time of Gregory the Seventh, another Pope Gregory, surnamed the Great, not only asserted the Celibacy of the Clergy, but extended the law to the order of Subdeacons, and even he only repeated the prohibition in the third Canon of the Council of Nice (A. D. 325) against clergymen contracting marriage after their ordination; so that ‘ the Church herself ’ had prohibited Marriage and enjoined Celibacy upon the Clergy just 750 years before the reign of Gregory VII., who is here represented as the founder of that discipline.”

Will it be believed that, for the sake of producing a momentary impression in favour of the Celibacy of the Clergy, an Editor—still professedly Protestant—could have the effrontery to utter such equivocations?

Even assuming their authenticity, the Reports of the Council of Nice make express provision in favour of those Presbyters (or Priests) who were married men. The Council interdicts the unmarried *only**. It concedes the inviolability of the marriage bond which others had contracted.

In adducing this authority, it must not be supposed that we fully accredit any records that are given to us as those of the Council of Nice. Nevertheless, those that remain to us, whether

* “Decernimus, ut Episcopi non habitent cum mulieribus; neque Presbyter, *qui viduus est*,” etc. Ca. IV. Can. Nicæen. Græc. 3. Epitome hujus ex Arabico.

authentic or surreptitious, confirm our statement that the Reviewer is in flagrant error.

Further: we ask leave to quote the authority of the Ecclesiastical historian, Socrates*. If the Reviewer can read Greek, he will there find that the Bishops and Presbyters, at the Council of Nice, did most peremptorily *reject* that proposal concerning Celibacy which he has had the unlearned hardihood to declare to have been accepted and affirmed.

It must be observed, that the object of the Tractarian Reviewer is to impugn the Author's allegation against Pope Hildebrand, viz. that,

* Socrates, I. 11: Ἐδόκει τοῖς ἐπισκόποις νόμον νεαρὸν εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν εἰσφέρειν, ὥστε τοὺς ἱερωμένους, λέγω δὲ ἐπισκόπους καὶ πρεσβυτέρους, μὴ συγκαθεύδειν ταῖς γαμετῖς, ἅς ἔτι λαϊκοὶ ὄντες ἡγάγοντο: διὸ καὶ τὴν περὶ τούτου ζήτησιν ἀπεσίγησαν, τῇ γνώμῃ τῶν βουλομένων ἀπέχεσθαι τῆς ὁμιλίας τῶν γαμετῶν καταλείψαντες.

in defiance of the permission of the Church, he remorselessly severed those ties of matrimony which *had been* contracted by the Clergy. And the Reviewer sees fit to adduce, in mere passing reference (not in words, for that he wisely shunned to do), that very Canon of the Nicene Council which would have recognised the right of Count Ranulph to retain his wife, Elgitha.

As far as respects the Reviewer's mention of Gregory I. surnamed the Great, it is enough for the Author to reply, that this very Bishop of Rome denounced the office of "Universal Bishop" as the stigma of Antichrist; that, whatever were his views in regard to Clerical Celibacy, he never pretended to more than Diocesan authority; and that Hildebrand's assumption of a more extensive jurisdiction may have been, if the Reviewer likes, the topic of Gregory the Great's prophetic interpretation.

Only once more would the Author presume to detain his readers.

In the following little volume it is stated that Pope Hildebrand befriended Berengarius. This the Reviewer, with more than his previous vehemence, denies.

Even if he had greater space, the Author would deem it enough for him to quote the words of Pope Hildebrand, in his Letter for the protection of Berengarius, wherein—by the power of his anathema—he forbids any one to call Berengarius a heretic, or to inflict upon him any personal injury ; wherein, likewise, he calls him a true son of the Roman Church. This letter was written, be it remembered, *after that* — for reasons of Ecclesiastical policy—the Pontiff assumed a course of action ostensibly adverse to Berengarius*.

Surely, if the abettors of Tractarianism—in

their earnestness for the Celibacy of the Clergy and for the doctrine of Transubstantiation—have to resort to Historical Falsifications such as those that are here adduced—the Protestant Church might rest quiet. But untruths, when reiterated, often become truths in seeming.

* “Omnibus b. Petro fidelibus. Notum vobis omnibus facimus, nos anathema fecisse omnibus, qui injuriam aliquam facere præsumserint Berengario, Romanæ Ecclesiæ filio; vel qui eum vocabit hæreticum” . . . Literæ commendatiæ Gregorii VII. datæ Berengario: in d’Achery Spicileg. Ed. 2, T. iii. 413. *See, for a full account of Hildebrand’s affection for the person and approval of the doctrine of Berengarius, Martenne, Thesaur. Anecd. tom. iv. p. 99–109.*

PART I.

HILDEBRAND

AND

THE EMPEROR.

CHAPTER I.

“ From its Benedictine coop
“ Issues the master mind, at whose fell swoop
“ The chaste affections tremble to fulfil
“ Their purposes.”

WORDSWORTH'S ECCLESIASTICAL SKETCHES.

It was in the autumn of the year of our Lord 1076, when the following scene took place in the room of a castle some few miles from the royal city of Spires, upon the Rhine.

Upon the accidents of the chamber of this scene—such as the rich oak panels on its walls, its rude but impressive paintings, its Venetian

mirrors—the spectator and listener, if a man of common humanity, could not have dwelt for one moment. He would have seen—and enough it was!—a young and beautiful female crouching, almost kneeling, at the feet of a comparatively young ecclesiastic. The latter was seated, and in the most painful restlessness, upon that which, from its elevation and richness, one would have called a “chair of state.” The young lady was, as we have said, crouching, almost kneeling, at his feet. His attitude, his look, yea, the convulsions of a most noble face, showed that he sat there and thence listened to the fair being with the profoundest and most painful sympathy. Her whole expression, as well as position, betrayed a paroxysm of sorrow; her hands were clasped as she hid her face in them, and she was weeping so bitterly that the tears coursed down in streams over her very arms. The agony of grief had allowed her long fair locks to fall dishevelled,—even her white veil had fallen off.

“Weep not so bitterly, mine own Elgitha, or thou wilt unman me!” said the ecclesiastic, endeavouring gently to raise the exhausted form of his wife, as he pressed her to his heart and

cried aloud, "Weep not, Elgitha! Oh! weep not so!"

"Not weep, Ranulph?" she exclaimed; "Not weep? If this cruel edict be enforced upon us, what have I but to weep for the rest of my wretched days? May they be few, great God of Pity!"

"Nay, nay, Elgitha," returned the earnestly affectionate and evidently ingenuous priest; "weep not, despair not thus! Even now the Holy Father may relent."

"He relent!" said Elgitha, "He relent! Thou may'st as well hope for the tigress to relent over her prey, whilst the cries of her starving cubs are in her ears. Relent! he! I know him well," she added, drawing up her slight figure, "I know him to be a man relentless for the sake of one great purpose. What careth he if the wheels of the chariot of his universal throne should crush thine heart, Ranulph, and mine also, and our childrens', and the hearts of myriads upon myriads? I know him. What careth he, though all the great dynasties of the world be overset, if the Papal Power but flourish?"

"Hush, hush, Elgitha, my own love! Speak not

so of Christ's Vicar. Nay more, these very walls have ears; were these words heard, what would be thy fate—what mine?"

"What *thine*?" and Elgitha mused for a moment. "What *thine*?" continued she, in increased fervency of manner and of words. "Have I forgotten that? I will be dumb."

"Nay, nay—Elgitha. Thy words I would not stay. But oh! I pray thee be reverent about our Holy Father."

"Reverent—that is to say obedient—to our Holy Father! That I will not, that I cannot be!" she passionately answered. "Is this the Vicar of the Christ who was 'meek and lowly of heart?' Is this the Vicar of the Christ who bound up broken hearts? Is this the Vicar of the Christ whose yoke was 'easy, and whose burden was light,' who can now, and by Christ's authority, tear thee thus summarily from thy babes—from me; can cover them with dishonour as bastards, and myself with shame, as an unholy concubine? Ranulph! Ranulph! be a man and answer me."

As Elgitha uttered these last words she fainted. Her poor weak frame had become powerless from the action of the fire within her.

Ranulph summoned her attendants ; but, though each and all eagerly ministered to her weakness, there was no one so earnest in effort—so tender, so anxiously hopeful, as himself.

Elgitha, upon her recovery, and when no others besides her husband were within hearing, murmured, “Ranulph, beloved Ranulph ! tell me, wilt thou, at the bidding of the hard-hearted Pontiff, abandon thine own Elgitha, stamp her with burning shame upon her brow, as if she were a common wanton instead of being thy true and lawful wife ? Shall thy boys be ?”

With almost unnatural strength she rushed away from the chamber, and, opening an opposite door, walked up to the cradle of her youngest boy—a babe of but three months old—and tearing it from its little couch, together with an elder child whom she seized by the arm with a convulsiveness that pained herself as the mother more than it pained the boy, returned to the room where her husband was sitting, still lost in painful deliberation. She approached him, and softly placing the sleeping babe in his arms, and making the elder one kneel down before his father, she said, “Let these babes plead for themselves—for me !”

Ranulph looked—the big tear stood in his eyes, and he rose from his chair in tremulous emotion ; he looked upon the babe ; he placed his quivering hand upon the elder one ; he looked again—again—moved forward to give his own wife an embrace, shuddered, and then fell back upon his seat.

There was a long dead silence.

“ Needs it, my Elgitha, that these babes should plead with me for thee and for themselves ? ” he asked, as soon as he had subdued emotions that had threatened to suffocate him. “ God is my witness,” he fervently continued, “ how fearful is the pang with which I now contemplate my enforced separation from thee, beloved one ! and from our babes ; yet what else can happen ? Rude force will rend us from each other. The Holy Father knows no human weakness. Never will he be deterred by woman’s tears or man’s misery from carrying out what he deems for the Church’s good.”

“ Fly then, fly to some spot where his power cannot reach us,” Elgitha replied, imploringly.

“ Alas ! and where is that ? ” asked Ranulph. “ There is no spot in Christian Europe but what lies beneath the sway of this successor of St. Peter.

To what nook or corner of his vast dominions could our own Henry point as for our refuge? Is not Philip of France writhing within the folds of the Sovereign Pontiff? Is not Saxony his fief? Has not Spain, has not Arragon done him temporal homage? Whither ah! whither could we fly?"

"Oh! Ranulph—dearest Ranulph—hast thou forgotten BRITAIN? Recollect I not how thine eye kindled, how thy cheek flushed with high sympathy, as thou heardest the report of the stern reply of the King of England to the Pontiff's claims, "I HOLD MY KINGDOM OF GOD AND OF MY SWORD?" Didst thou not tell me, but some weeks ago, that even Hildebrand had been compelled to connive at the decision of a council, in that far land, 'that ecclesiastics who, as yet, had wives, might still retain them?' Fly, oh! fly, dear Ranulph, to Britain."

"What, Elgitha! and become an excommunicated man? The very thought . . . but no more—no more—dearest. My heart is heavy—my mind is clouded. I must retire and pray for guidance in this fearful strait. And do thou, Elgitha—mine own Elgitha—take away our babes; and, though apart, let us be one in prayer to God and to the Blessed Virgin."

She bent her head and received his priestly blessing ; calmly sad, she took the hand of the elder child, who had been weeping in instinctive sorrow, and, with her infant on her bosom, she left the chamber.

CHAPTER II.

“That man i’ the world, who shall report he has
A better wife, let him in nought be trusted,
For speaking false in that : Thou art, alone
(If thy rare qualities, sweet gentleness,
Thy meekness saintlike, wife-like government,—
Obeying in commanding,—and thy parts
Sovereign and pious else, could speak thee out)
The queen of earthly queens.”

KING HENRY VIII.

SOME few remarks upon the state of political and ecclesiastical matters, in the year 1076, will be of importance, in order to account for the scene of the previous chapter.

The Pope Gregory the Seventh,—better known as the celebrated Hildebrand,—had already for three years held the Pontificate. In fact, he had possessed all the administrative powers of the popedom during the last quarter of a century ; for his five predecessors were indebted to him for their nomination, and implicitly confided in his talents. Throughout this preliminary period he

availed himself, to the utmost, of every possible agency for aggrandizing the Holy See. And when he himself attained the chair of St. Peter, he inexorably resolved on giving those agencies both organization and power. He seems to have been actually *possessed* with an idea, which must be admitted to be sublime, although we cannot award it the praise of the meek righteousness of Christ. There lay before him, in his ecclesiastical survey, a number of nations, called Christian, in which the priests of the Church were the nominees of the temporal authority; where the sacred functions were common matters of civil contract. He saw, moreover, monks, and priests, and bishops, living in the most gross and undisturbed concubinage. He saw, still farther, that the title of his own universal episcopate was undetermined as to whether it owed its authenticity to the suffrages of the Church or to the nomination of the King of the Romans. All these things he saw; and it were wickedly uncharitable to conclude, from his stern resolve to remedy abuses which he thought flagrant, that his object was one wholly sinister or selfish.

He proposed to remedy the whole when the thought of acquiring a more comprehensive do-

minion seized upon him. To be the sovereign of the whole earth, wielding no mere earthly sceptre, but one, the temper and power of which should, at his fiat, be able to break in pieces all inferior sceptres, each or together ; to make every monarch his feudatory ; to reclaim and hold the right of appointment of every spiritual function, great or small, with all its temporal adjuncts ; to enthrall under his direct will and law every ecclesiastic, and make him, in his own undistracted personality, his ready vassal ; to constitute around his spiritual throne a parliament of cardinals, from whom should issue—but in dependence upon his individual sanction—all edicts, all arbitrations, all depositions, all investitures, whether they affected emperors, kings, princes, lords or commons, laymen or churchmen ; to be, thus, the head of an universal earthly dynasty,—this was his great, grand, but unchristian purpose. In the multitude of perverting church feelings, we may concede that he was deceived as to his own proper selfishness. We would concede it fully, had he not employed, in the prosecution of that purpose, forces which were not more anti-christian in their spirit than cruel and inhuman, proud and self-willed in their activity.

To only two of his measures for this object does our tale require a notice. First, he insisted on the absolute insulation of every ecclesiastic from all social ties. He was not content with the command that thenceforth every monk, priest, and prelate should avoid that guilty concubinage in which the unmarried had for years on years been unblushingly indulging : but although, up to his own age, the secular ministers of religion had been allowed, by the Church herself, to marry ; although ties of the most holy nature with wives and children had been ratified by the Church herself,—he cruelly, remorselessly, insisted on their disruption. Anathema on anathema succeeded in cases of revolt and disobedience ; and thence it followed that hundreds, nay thousands, of heart-broken women,—hundreds, nay thousands, of blighted men were torn apart. Shame suffused the brow of the chaste matron ; for the Vicar of Christ had branded it. Children innumerable were made worse than orphans ; for the Holy Father had cast foul scorn upon their parentage ; and men of piety in doctrine, and in life, and in conscience, were defiled ; for the chief apostle of a gentle and tender Master created, of his own will, an imaginary crime.

Secondly. — The fiefs of ecclesiastics had been voluntarily granted by the sovereigns that were around him. Largesses of land, endowments of money too, had been showered with princely munificence upon parishes, abbacies, and sees. The tenures by which they were to be held were first those of royal grant, and then those of loyal fealty. But such conditions Hildebrand pronounced invalid. Over these high properties he insisted on having absolute control. From him, and from him alone, each vicariate should have its minister; each monastery, its abbot; each episcopate, its bishop.

It was natural that the sovereigns of Europe should revolt. In especial, Henry IV. of Germany resolved upon an indignant resistance against such consummate audacity; but the power of the priest was irresistible, and at the moment when our tale opens, the monarch of the vastest and most powerful European kingdom was, in the town of Spire, a solitary. Servants, pages, courtiers, friends, ministers of state—all had left him; for Pope Gregory the Seventh—Hildebrand—had uttered his excommunication—had pronounced him to be a moral leper.

Ranulph, it will now be suspected, was one

of those priests on whom the persevering exaction of the Pontiff was now about to be enforced. Some years before, he had married Elgitha, the only child of the rich and powerful Baron Olbert. He was somewhat older than his sovereign Henry. He had been his playmate in childhood ; his friend in youth. It is true that the virtuous Ranulph had forsworn the habitual society of the young monarch, scared away by that monarch's dissoluteness ; but awake, as he was, to the vilely organized corruption to which his young liege had fallen a victim, and aware too of his high qualities, that, like diamonds, remained in the midst of foul incrustations, he ever held himself ready to show his loyal sympathy, and to give his counsel when Henry was in sorrow or in danger.

That harrowing scene between Ranulph and his wife—to which we have referred already—had scarcely closed, when an acolyte entered the chamber, on having gently monished his superior of his approach.

As he opened the arras he beheld the Priest kneeling upon a prie-dieu, with a crucifix extended in his hand ; and before he could withdraw, which he did promptly and most modestly,

the words burst upon his ear, " Father, Father of Heaven, help me and mine ! Son of infinite love, help me and mine ! Thou Virgin Mother, help—befriend me and mine !"

May we unveil more ? He humbly, earnestly asked for guidance. Sad to say—for he was as yet ignorant of the single efficiency of the Great High Priest—he addressed his heart-broken prayers chiefly to the Virgin, to St. Peter, and St. Paul. Yet no one who heard those cries could doubt that, though much of superstition darkened that earnest soul, they were, nevertheless, informed in light from God. His mind was, as he himself expressed it, dark and clouded. He was living in a dark and superstitious age ; and though his clear and penetrating intellect made him reject much of the grosser forms of the system of which he was a priest, yet the horror of excommunication, if he disobeyed the cruel edict of the Pontiff, was strong within his troubled soul.

He rose from his knees, and there was a pause. Then what thoughts of deliberative agony crossed him ! " Shall I, can I, should I abandon mine own Elgitha—my lawful wife, the mother of my boys ? Shall I, can I, should I ? "

There was a gentle but firm knock for entrance. "Enter," answered Ranulph. And the meek young acolyte, who had so shortly before withdrawn himself, stood immediately in advance of the arras, and, with his arms crossed upon his breast, remained in waiting.

"My son," asked the Priest, gently but disturbedly, "what meaneth this interruption?"

"Oh! pardon me, my lord, but I have twice essayed to tell thee that there waits a messenger from the Emperor, commanding thine instant presence."

"I will follow him on the moment," rejoined Ranulph.

But, as he was in the act of accoutreing himself for his ride to Spires, a chamberlain entered, and somewhat abruptly announced that two ladies, who were evidently of high rank, were waiting, with their retainers, at the gates; and that one, obviously the mistress of the other, earnestly besought an interview.

"Impossible!" answered Ranulph, in a voice so disturbed, and with a tone so unusual to his lips, that his attendant was surprised. "Impossible! Tell the noble dame, whoever she may be, that I am this instant summoned to my sove-

reign. She will well know that that command can brook no delay."

The chamberlain retired with reverence, but, to the astonishment and indignation of Ranulph, returned, followed by a veiled female.

"How darest thou," he exclaimed, "thus disobey my most emphatic order? Said I not that I could not be delayed?"

The chamberlain retreated backward, and, to Ranulph's great surprise, without answering one syllable. The arras opened, then closed again, leaving him and the veiled lady alone.

Eagerly, and to anticipate any severe rebuke, the lady threw off the large, thick, white hood that concealed her person, and revealed to his astonishment the fair form and features of the Empress Bertha—the neglected, insulted wife of Henry the Fourth of Germany.

"Most gracious madam!" exclaimed the Priest, as he bent his knee in chivalrous and feudal homage, "pardon me my rudeness. Tell me, my royal mistress, but tell me thy commands. How came thy Highness hither, and wherefore? But let thy faithful subject pray thee to command a seat."

"My lord," returned the Empress, but in

tones so soft, so tremulous, yet so clearly defined, that they bespoke the gentleness, anxiety, and, at the same time, firmness of the heart that dictated them,—“My lord, I have heard, this last hour only, that, in the extremity of his distress, the Emperor was about to summon thee to his councils. Ah! would that to those councils thou hadst never made thyself a stranger!”

“A stranger to his imperial council-chamber, most gracious Queen, I have been; for albeit my youth’s admiration and the fealty of my later years to my sovereign,—who has deigned to keep in mind his friendship for Ranulph,—have bound me inalienably to his person, yet how could a priest of the Most High God sanction or approve the false, evil counsellors, by whom he has been misguided? Nay more, my royal mistress, how dared I smile complacently upon his gross and cruel conduct towards yourself?”

“First give me thy blessing, Father, and then suffer me to answer,” said the Empress. “Bless me, and pray for me, and now guide me,” she continued. “My object in thus persisting for an interview involves no thought, I hope humbly, of which thy Divine Master would disapprove.”

There was a sacred, solemn pause. . . .

“And now, my lord,” said Bertha, as she raised her pale, sweet face, “I feel strengthened to unfold to thee my object in this my, I fear, obtrusive visit. Though, as thou knowest, I dwell in a distant solitude, I have heard that Henry, whom in spite of his conduct I still acknowledge as my liege, my husband, is beset with war, with danger. I have heard that the haughty, grasping Pontiff has pronounced his anathema upon him. He, imperious, selfish, astute priest as he is, covering his insatiable ambition, to get the Emperor within his power, with the low hypocrisy of indignation at those crimes which are every hour, and with impunity if not connivance, practised in his own court at Rome! I have heard that the Emperor’s minions, even his courtiers,—aye, his own ministers of state,—have deserted him. I hear that his very army, once so fearless, are paralyzed by this atrocious fiat of the Pontiff. And, my lord, is this a time for a wife to stand aloof from her husband, though he has deserted her? And for what? My own wrongs are mine own: did I ever give warrant unto Hildebrand to use them for his own self-seeking? Thou goest to thy deserted, seduced sovereign; tell him, then, that there is still one faithful

heart that clings the closer to him as his friends wax cold, as false sycophants retire. Tell him, that Bertha, had his prosperity continued, had never, unsought, approached him. Tell him, that in this hour of his adversity and humiliation she forgets the past,—longs to fly to him. One condition only I must make: his wanton mistress shall never approach my presence. Fallen though he is, I can trust his imperial honour for the rest."

"Know you not, most noble princess, that even she has deserted my forlorn master? The holy Pontiff,—the very people,—impugn her influence over him as the cause of his resistance to the papal power."

Bertha raised her large blue eyes to heaven. "Holy Virgin!" she cried, "Holy Virgin! mother pure and undefiled, for this I thank thee! by this, Henry will now learn the difference, in an hour of need, between a faithful wife and a false wanton."

"Wilt thou, my lord," she, after a few seconds, said, "wilt thou tell the Emperor that though the mother that bore him has joined his adversary, Bertha waits but one kind word and she will return to him, cheer him, soothe him,

help to support him, bear afflictions with him. Say to me, am I right in this resolve, my lord ?”

“ Yea verily, my most noble, generous mistress,” replied the Priest. “ This will be that practical religion that commands us all to forgive each other his trespasses, even as God for Christ’s sake has forgiven us ; to do good for them that despitefully use us ; *if* thou canst so forget the past, and, without upbraiding, return to thy royal husband, then all may yet be well. Then, he may be withdrawn from the courses into which false evil counsellors have guided and accustomed him. Then, he may become a great and worthy descendant of the Cæsars, whose throne he fills.”

“ God grant he may !” exclaimed Bertha, “ but thou knowest, my lord Ranulph, my influence with the Emperor is of the smallest. Nay,” she added, “ perhaps now he will not even see me. He has ever shewn too evident a desire to be rid of me.”

The lord Ranulph was so long silent, and so agitated, and so deliberative in mood, that the Empress Bertha began to be alarmed lest she should have passed beyond those limits of true matronly forbearance which the Church prescribed.

“ My royal mistress is right—right— all noble—and, moreover, Christian in this resolve. I will aid it—with the help of God,” almost unconsciously he soliloquized.

“ Madam,” he continued, more aloud, “ would it please you to command your followers to enter my poor house, and to remain here, while I travel with all speed to the Emperor’s Council ? It may be, that he will deign me an audience by ourselves. My own wife shall attend you, as I bear your missive to the Emperor.”

“ Thanks—my best thanks—to you, kind, noble Ranulph ;” replied the Empress, “ I will direct my few attendants to alight, and partake of your hospitality. As to myself, I ask only some solitary chamber, until I know my fate. Elgitha will forgive me for not wishing to see even her, just now.”

CHAPTER III.

"The ancient thrones of Christendon are stuff
For occupation of a magic wand,
And 'tis the Pope that wields it,—whether rough
Or smooth his front, our world is in his hand."

WORDSWORTH.

THE day was fast closing in, while a small body of retainers, of the old feudal age, was waiting with growing impatience the descent of their lord from the upper stories of the castle in which the scenes of the previous chapters of this history had transpired. The greater number of them sat in the calm, expressionless discipline of a well-conditioned soldiery. Their morions were burnished, and carefully fitted to the head; their breast-plates, and so, likewise, their hauberks, were equally indicative of habit and precaution. And each guardsman held his lance with a firm calmness,—looking out, however, for his chieftain, whose arrival would be a signal for religious as well as for feudatory homage.

But some hour or more transpired, and the

troop was becoming restless, when there came forth from the postern a noble-looking man, clad in mail, yet with a surcoat so marked with ecclesiastical emblems, that no observer could mistake his high priestly and feudal dignity.

“ To Spires, and to the palace of the Emperor !” was his brief command to an officer that had placed himself near the gate.

They rode onward through the small park of the domain ; then entered on the high road to the city. The little troop had duly marshalled itself ; but—strange to say, for it was such an unaccustomed habit of their lord—all their minute and careful and deferential movements obtained from him no one word of high companion-like sympathy : and they became dispirited and silent.

But as their leader—priest and soldier as he was—rode onward in their front, what terrible paroxysms of silent thought had he not ! Was he to tear himself from his own—his beloved Elgitha ? *That* alone rent him asunder. Then again—Was he to denaturalize his own babes ? “ And for what, most gracious God ?” he murmured, “ Hath thy Holy Vicar been commanded by thyself thus to break my heart-strings ? I will be dumb ; I will open not my mouth if

Thou dost it. The Lord gave—Oh! didst Thou not give them?—and if the Lord take away, yet blessed be the name of the Lord!”

Thus continued he in his murmurs during the earlier portion of his ride:—he had ordered his more immediate attendants to leave that ride solitary.

But as he approached Spires, as he drew near to the palace of the Emperor, he bethought himself of the preliminary mission with which he had been so solemnly entrusted; and collecting every mental force that was within his reach, he prepared himself for the audience.

Then again, as he crossed the moat of the city bridge, he could not, if he would, suppress the self-reasoning—“Is he, who was so lately a mighty monarch—is he to be thus dishonoured by desertion? Alas! poor young Emperor! Thy past profligacy will, I fear me, lay heavily at the door of thine instructors—priestly though they were! Did they not basely—insidiously—corrupt thee? Laid they no meshes in thy path? And had they no selfish purposes in so doing? Nay, had they not the full consent of prelates, even of the Pope? Can it, oh! can it be according to God’s will that

Priest or Pope should sanction or do these deeds of sin, for the mere sake of extending the Pontiff's temporal prerogative?"

We must state here, that, since that edict of Hildebrand had been issued which commanded all married ecclesiastics to renounce their wives, Ranulph had withdrawn from his ecclesiastical domains, and whilst remaining in the strictest solitude, in a castle belonging to his own family near Spire, had known—only from rumour—that the Emperor had been deserted by his court and army, each of these having fled from him, not so much because of his wayward follies and crimes, as from affright at the ban of excommunication that had been passed upon their Sovereign. That the personal behaviour of the Emperor had fearfully alienated his subjects, especially his Saxon subjects, is an historical fact; still, this alienation would never have led to disloyalty, but for the astute conduct of the Pontiff. He seemed, from his actions, to believe that the abundant crop of wild oats that had been sown by the reckless young Monarch might most properly, and with religious economy, be gathered in to the garner of the Church.

But for all these terrible facts, the high-minded,

the noble-hearted, the ingenuous Ranulph, was unprepared. How could such a man as he dream of motives and purposes in the mind of the Vicar of Christ, which could prompt the servant of a merciful and forbearing God to seize upon human crimes—and, that too, with a complacent avidity—in order to advance the cause of truth and holiness? Further, he could never dream that a great and thoughtful people—such as that of his own Fatherland—could be seduced by the subtleties of such self-seeking.

What, then, was his surprise—nay, awe—when, as he threaded his way through the narrow and involved streets of Spires, he found them almost empty? An air of desolation—as that of a plague—reigned over the town; and when he approached the palace of his Sovereign, it seemed to be deserted. Guards there were none to mark the imperial presence. One solitary sentinel passed slowly, and with a careworn look, before the gates.

On giving his name, Ranulph obtained immediate admission to the royal palace, from one of the few and scared attendants. He was, after some slight delay, shewn into a large and desolate hall, where, seated, in despair, he

saw the youthful Monarch—Henry the Fourth of Germany—one born to so vast and so noble an heritage,—one, who merely for asserting his rights, those which his predecessors on his throne had invariably exercised, was now an excommunicated alien from the fellowship of Christ's Church. To such a condition was he reduced by Hildebrand—Pope Gregory the Seventh; by him, who called himself the Vicar of that Blessed Master, who forewent the available force of even angels, in order that he might, by suffering, prove that his kingdom was not of this world.

Ranulph could not, at first, identify his Sovereign; his beard—the growth of many weeks—hung neglected, even matted; so did his long, sunny locks, which were uncrowned. His attire—which, usually, was most splendid and befitting his supernal rank, as an earthly monarch—was soiled, disordered. His eye rolled fiercely, and anon it sank into the glass-like unmeaningness of despair. Misfortunes, many and heavy, had heretofore told but little upon his thoughtless but brave soul. But when friends, when courtiers who had fed upon his smile, when the minions of his profligacy—whose vows of love had sustained him

in a factitious endurance of insult from the Pope,—when even his own mother—the Dowager Empress Agnes—had abandoned him, his heart quailed. Guilty he felt himself to be—guilty towards his God and towards his pure and gentle Empress. Yet still—and as the only thought that kept him from moral inanition—he could ask, and that truthfully—“Would this incarnation of ambitious purpose—this haughty Pontiff—have ever thought of this audacious insult, though my crimes were indefinitely multiplied in number and increased in enormity—provided that I did him homage?—Never—never. Bad as I am; fool as I have been; treacherous to my crown and to my wife as I have been—I will fall, if fall I must, as a guilty sinner—loving the holiness he has not—yet cursing the flagrant hypocrisy of such a whited sepulchre!”

In this mood—and with features varying from remorse to a more genial grief; from despair to active and purposeful rage—in this mood the lord Ranulph found his Sovereign. As he approached, the Monarch turned upon him a stern, sad glance.

“Come near,” said the Emperor—after some moments of terrible silence—“come near, Lord

Ranulph, and I will tell thee the bitter lesson I am learning. Listen. The way to buy ingratitude is to lavish favour. These my old courtiers—where are they *now*? Just—forsooth—because this base-born Priest of Rome has spoiled my table, they have fled off to other dainties. So too my ministers of state—the earthquake from hell has frightened them. Ah! ah! Ranulph—my old friend, they have a precious escort—my fools, my mistresses, are in good company! But why art *thou* here *now*? Why not away—away? The poor ship is sinking, why hast thou not sought some boat to save thee from the breakers?"

"My Liege, my Liege," answered Ranulph, looking upon his young sovereign with homage, yet with pain and pity; "it grieves me to the very soul to behold you and to hear you thus."

"Ranulph," exclaimed the Monarch, "I have refused to listen when thou gavest me good advice. Thou didst meet this, my sad refusal, by absence from my court when I was prosperous, glorious. Why, then, dost thou obey my summons when, to be my friend, my counsellor, is to call down papal vengeance?"

. . . . The young Emperor had uttered these words with such exhausting vehemence, that he

had to pause. "Yes, yes," he resumed, after a time and with the most broken tones; "my own mother is against me! I am alone—alone—and in sin! God help me!"

"My own Liege, speak not thus; for thy playmate, Ranulph,—thy faithful but sorrowing Ranulph, despite the recklessness with which his royal master has charged himself,—has not left his sovereign. Nay more, far more," continued he, as he stood in gentle guise, albeit that standing was erect in its priestliness,—“your majesty has still one constant heart upon which you may repose; one fond heart that will cling the closer as friends fall off.”

"What mean you, my lord?" almost shouted the Emperor, as he sprang from his chair, and with an agonizing uncertainty of feeling mixed with anger. "Come not, Lord Ranulph, and make my misery the greater by any falsely honied words. Remember that I am Henry still; and my wrath can even now awaken."

Ranulph stood calm—firm in feeling and resolve. He saw before him a mighty potentate humbled, degraded, by that spiritual authority to which he himself had sworn allegiance. Manifold were the thoughts that crossed his bosom at

such a scene. Some were those of awe at the religious power to which he had consecrated his fealty; others were those of patriotic indignation; not a few, and not the least active within him, were those of instinctive sympathy with his insulted sovereign.

"The Empress Bertha," he began in answer. . .

"Name her not," said Henry, again regaining his majesty of command: "Name her not, my lord: I fear me much that her wrongs are the cause why I have incurred the wrath of the Almighty."

"And yet, Sire," said Ranulph, with sad composure, "I must tell your majesty that the Empress, the mother of your heir, waits but one word from you, and she will hasten to your side, will do her utmost to soothe, to sympathize."

"When sawest thou the Empress?" said the startled Henry.

"Only one short hour ago, my Liege," was the answer. "It was in mine own abode. I had been more prompt in obedience to the imperial summons but for her royal intercept. She commands me to assure you, Sire, that she longs to hasten to your side; that she is forgetful of the past; that she will prove your truest friend. Believe me,

Sire, there is no friend like a fond and faithful wife."

A sudden, an appalling change, came over the young Monarch. We have already hinted that, ever since the publication of the Pontiff's ban, princes, courtiers, sycophants, all had been gradually deserting him. He stood alone! A fierce and bitter sense of ingratitude and wrong, therefore, had made his mind stern and sullen. But the contrast of the conduct of his lovely and injured wife came with a melting power upon his spirit. He spake not, but he turned aside his head, and the Count—trembling at the necessity to break silence—saw his Imperial master's features convulsed with emotion, and two large tears standing motionless upon his eyes.

"Bertha! Bertha! wronged Bertha! canst thou, O! wilt *thou* come here? By God's help, I will again wound thee—never," said Henry to himself.

"Enough," soliloquised Lord Ranulph; "that first blessed point is gained."

But he had scarcely felt this holy congratulation, when the Monarch turned to him, and said—

"Ranulph! dear, faithful Ranulph! tell the

Empress what has come within thine hearing. But now for other things,—things which are so pressing that even she would command us instantly to attend to them. Thou seest me without advisers,—all have left me ; and without friends, without an escort, with nothing, save yon poor, staunch sentinel and his little troop. Come, sit thee down, Ranulph ; it will be in thy way to ‘weep with those that weep.’ Says not thy book so, Reverend Father ?”

“ Canst thou give me hopeful counsel ?” he resumed ; “ or is my case too desperate ?”

“ May it please your Highness,” the Priest answered, “ I have been for months driven into such strict retirement, since the Pontiff’s alternative of the abandonment of my wife or the renunciation of my office, that I know but little, save that of which the Empress hath forewarned me.”

“ Ranulph,” replied the Emperor, and as he did so he grasped the hand of his youth’s friend ; “ Ranulph, the Pope hath pronounced his ban upon me,—upon me, the descendant of the Cæsars ! Suabia, Saxony, vile traitors as they are, convened a Council at Tribur (our own Oppenheim), and my deposition from the throne of my fathers is foully threatened, unless by

February I obtain remission from this insatiate Pontiff."

"Obtain it! O obtain it! and at any cost, my Royal Master."

"And so thou, Ranulph,—thou who I thought would never fail me, thou, once so warm in friendship, and for so many a day so faithful, though neglected,—so thou, too, canst counsel me, like those base, bad sycophants upon whom I have spent my all,—thou canst counsel thy sovereign to do a dastard deed, and to propitiate a low, base-born, insolent Italian priest! So thou canst add *thy* drop to my cup of bitters! But Sir Priest, hear me; I care nought for ye all. Though I be not yet what thine ambitious churchmen call 'the Lord's anointed;' though no oil of consecration have wetted these miserable locks, I am yet Henry the Fourth of Germany; and in the name of that Almighty God by whom, and by whom alone, I tell thee, kings reign, ye shall rue it, all of ye, even if your proud Vatican crumbles into powder. Say no more, Sir Priest; you can retire."

"My Liege, my Liege," exclaimed the Count, "Here, priest of the Most High God though I am, I bend my knee to thee. Woes have I of mine own. At this very moment the wife of my

heart faints in anguish, because our Holy Father would disunite us. Yet hear me, most Gracious God; this may wither me, but to be called disloyal, faithless My Sovereign, my Royal Master, I am no traitor. Heed, O! heed my counsel! then misjudge me if thou canst."

"Then give thy reasons for such craven counsel: I will listen," said the monarch, sternly, though somewhat relentingly.

Ranulph, though far in advance of his age, was awe-struck at the fiat of the Pope; nay, more, his mind was not a little tinctured with the spirit of the policy of the papal court.

"Your highness *must* for the present yield. To speak more plainly than I have been wont, you *must*. Now is the crisis of your imperial fortunes. This ban of Gregory acts in two ways. It paralyses the superstitious, it affrights even the thoughtless of your people. Both fear to espouse your cause. The very soldiers dare not fight for you. Where now are the bishops of Bamberg, Strasburgh, Basle, Spire, Namberg, Osnaburck—where? yet they are still your faithful vassals. But bethink you, my royal liege, where are all others that were wont to call the sunshine of your countenance their very life,—*where* are they?

“And then, again. In the hands of enemies—and you have many in your land—this papal edict acts as a two-edged sword. All whom you have alienated, from various motives, seize it in order to excuse their treason. Oh! propitiate the pontiff. But get this anathema withdrawn. Submit, and then my sovereign can re-vindicate the rights of his crown and kingdom.”

“What!” said Henry, “re-vindicate my own and my people’s rights, having once sanctioned the independent, irresponsible election of this ambitious, despotic Pope? Pope he shall *not* continue! I will *not* submit! He shall taste—and that most bitterly—what it is to have a true church rival to contend against.”

“Then bide your time, my liege,” replied the Priest. “But meanwhile bend; and hear your servant. The storm is sweeping across the forest; God help my royal master to bow beneath its fury, and then to regain his majesty!”

“Nay—never, never will I bend!” the monarch passionately exclaimed. “Hast thou forgotten that since Otho, the second son of Henry the Fowler, at the head of a victorious army, past the Alps, subdued Italy, rescued the Pope,—that, since then Italy and Rome have

been feudatories to my crown? Hast thou forgotten that, since then, pontiffs have owed their office—their existence—to our sanction?”

Ranulph was listening, with secret ecstasy. The imperial spirit, so long merged in pleasure and in recklessness, seemed to be now aroused. With a sanguine, patriotic foresight, he beheld the ghostly render of his heart-strings, and the remorseless spiritual usurper of his fatherland, bowed down to that dust that would become him. Nevertheless, frightful was the inner conflict between these emotions in the prospect, and his conscientious reverence for the decisions and interests of the papal chair. He was still a churchman; and his struggle, in his separation from Elgitha and their children, showed how sincere he was.

“To all that my sovereign has just demanded,” he said “I answer, Yes. And yet, Hildebrand has power on his side enough to render such righteous claims invalid. Never will he abandon his vast projects save to a force which my royal master cannot *now* employ against him. I know him well.”

“Will Heaven aid him, Ranulph, thinkest thou?” asked Henry. “Did Heaven ever mean that

this ambitious son of a serf should plant his foot upon the necks of princes? But this—this is wrong, absurd; I recal it, and for ever. Fool as I have been—haughty, reckless as I have been—alas! perhaps still am—I can, nevertheless, respect the prerogatives of mind. With them I quarrel not: let him—this astute and clever pontiff—meet me as a man, and, in fair fight, conquer me, and I shall blame him not. But canst thou believe that the meek Saviour of the cross—He who when He saw an earthly sceptre bowed to it—will aid His vicar, in assumptions which we princes, among ourselves even, would pronounce to be cruel and rapacious? Counsel me not—Oh! counsel me not, Ranulph, as thou art doing. Yield I will not—never. For then, again—even could I suffer my crown, my sceptre to be begrimed at this arch-priest's footstool—what wouldst thou judge of me if I left thee, and thine Elgitha, and thy sons (to say nought of a myriad others), to be trampled on and crushed by so false a representative of Him who came to 'bind up the broken-hearted?'"

"Touch not that chord, my prince," said Ranulph, in a sudden, imploring accent. "Pray dismiss me, for my duty seems to have been

fulfilled, although, in part, so unsuccessful. Let me bear joy back to one heart at least, as I regain my melancholy homestead. Let me tell the Empress all that bears upon herself."

The monarch simply bowed assent. Yet his eye was full of kindness, and, as the Priest was retreating, he murmured forth, "Ranulph! return thee hither, and that soon."

CHAPTER IV.

"Why, friends, you go to do you know not what." . . .

"Now let it work ; mischief ; thou art afoot,
Take thou what course thou wilt !"

JULIUS CÆSAR.

THE noble Ranulph quitted the dreary palace with feelings very different from those with which he had entered it.

In common with the better-disposed part of Henry's subjects—both lay and ecclesiastical—he had with sorrow deemed his sovereign—in spite of the martial energy shown in his war in Saxony—to be sunk in all the imbecilities of a voluptuary. But when he heard the young Emperor avow his penitence for the past, and saw him so awake to his own and his kingdom's degradation, every German sympathy for the representative of the dynasties of Cæsar, of Charlemagne, of Otho, arose fresh within him.

And further, he recalled to mind that his monarch's youthful profligacy had been systema-

tically evoked and nourished by his guardian—an archbishop—with the guilty project to unfit the child Emperor for that government which he had usurped and desired to retain, uncontrolled, to himself. And in truth, more than a suspicion crossed him that in this plan, so diabolical, Hildebrand himself was an accomplice.

Ranulph's heart alternated between joy and shame;—joy, for he was feeling the pride and hope of a patriot; shame, for—conscientious churchman as he was—he blushed at what he knew to be more than a bare surmise as to the conduct of men who wore mitres, and of a man who wore the tiara.

He quickly formed a resolution. But of that we will speak more anon.

He was hastening through the town of Spires towards his own sad home, there to consider his future course, and, by God's help, to carry his resolve into execution, when a base and noisy rabble strove to gather around his steed and to intercept him from his followers. Epithets the most vile, the most opprobrious, were heaped upon him.

“Down, down with the obscene renegade priest!” shouted a tall, athletic friar, who seemed

to be the genius of the mob ; “ down with him ! Is he not still a rebel, with his wanton, against our Lord God the Pope ? ”

This was enough to wound Ranulph to the core ; but what pained him most was, that he heard every gross epithet bandied round, in disgusting ribaldry, upon his beloved Elgitha and his two fair boys.

“ Take that ! thou worse than base-born Italian beggar,” shouted a stalwart German yeoman, as he levelled the half-drunken friar to the earth. “ Take that ! miscreant ; and,” as he stood across the fallen form of his antagonist, he exclaimed, “ when thy senses return to thee, bear back home the curse of an honest German on thine own head and to thy master. Disgusting poltroon, but fit emissary as thou art ! ”

“ Thanks, friend ! ” meekly interposed Ranulph ; “ but forget thee not Him, who, when He was reviled, reviled not again.”

Onward, however, came the incensed rabble, though with a movement so disorderly as showed that their leader was now wanting.

Ranulph had taken with him, for his immediate attendants, two young gentlemen of high degree. He saw them resolutely preparing

to repel the onset. Resistance, by mere arms, he knew would be worse than useless; and he shuddered lest some indignity should make him forget that he was a priest of God, and impel him to oppose force by force.

Turning to his brave young esquires,—who had rode up on either side of him, and with drawn swords, he said, in a voice so loud that not only could his little troop hear him, as they were striving to encircle him, but his words reached the crowd—

“Sheathe your swords, dear Egelbert and Alcuin; the ‘weapons of my warfare are not carnal.’” Then, with a calm dignity, but with a tone of deep, deep pathos, he continued: “My German brothers, heap what you list upon my poor head, but, oh! insult not one as pure, as good, as the first gush of our own Father Rhine! If our holy Church hath decreed that marriage in a priest is a sinful, a forbidden thing, then must I part from my wife and little ones for ever. Seek not, then, to make mine agony the more bitter. Make me not to think that I have brought shame upon a wife so chaste, and on children still so innocent. Dear German brothers, whom of you has Elgitha wronged ever? whose sick-bed of

you has she ever shunned ? When ever was her now scanty purse closed to any of you when hungry or in grief ?”

“ Get thee up, master Friar—get thee up, thou knave !” exclaimed the yeoman whom we have already mentioned. “ Get thee up from thy swine-slough, and now speak to thy troops around thee. Get thee up, Monk, or, by the Holy Virgin, thou shalt have another and a colder bath. Father Rhine will not be furious as we ask him to bear thee hence, thou offal ! Get up !” —and he used his heavy boot to enforce his eloquence,—“ tell us thy mission, scoundrel. Thou wilt not ?”

All this time, the mob. touched as it was by the words of the noble speaker, had been making way for him and for his escort. He was proceeding onward, at a pace slow and dignified, when the uproar behind him made him arrest his horse.

“ Tell us thy mission, scoundrel !” echoed the excited rabble—ripe as it was, like all mobs, for a contradictory extreme.

But the Friar simulated death.

At this, the very men, whom, but a few moments before, he had been guiding, shrieked in derision—“ He is faint and wants water,”

cried one, "give him Rhine." "In truth," shouted another, "I know him to have had no water this last week." "Wash him," said a third, "it would do even his Holiness no harm."

Several broad-shouldered fellows—full of mischief—seized upon him, and were raising him aloft—the trophy of their fun—when the Friar's consciousness returned most opportunely. "Unhand me, Sirs; kind—dear Sirs—unhand me" he prayed most piteously.

"Ah! ah! his reverence is already shivering," cried one of his bearers—and with a hoarse laugh.

"To the river—to the river," echoed and re-echoed the rampant mob.

As he heard this, and could descry, in the distance, the struggles of the Friar, Ranulph turned back his horse, and, beckoning to his men to follow him, bounded off to the rescue.

"Friends—friends—Brother Germans!" he shouted, "Unhand this poor Minister of God, I pray ye. What harm doth he?"

"Has he not, my Lord," as they let down their pale, quivering burden, "Has he not basely—but too cleverly—roused us against your

Reverence? Has he not, for days past, been telling us every horror of yourself and of the Emperor?" said one.

"And did I not see, while he was in one of his drunken fits, exposed from beneath his cassock, some order from the Pope against—against . . . ?"

"Ah! my brethren," replied the Count, "and will you stain the honour of our Fatherland by shouting against me one moment, and, roughly treating my foe, anon?"

The whole mass was cowed with shame, and the Friar was allowed to move away.

Ranulph resumed his journey homeward. With innate delicacy his esquires fell back. They felt—otherwise was impossible—that, in spite of his apparent calmness, his soul must have been stirred from its very depths by the rude taunts that had met his ears.

On reaching the forest, he put spurs to his steed, as if desirous that the excited state of his feelings should find some vent in active bodily exertion.

But he indulged in it for a few moments only.

"Tell me, Egelbert," he said, as he drew rein, addressing the elder of his esquires, "Who,

thinkest thou, has stirred up this populace to insult one that has always been their friend ?”

“ The Papal emissaries, my Lord,” answered Egelbert, “ Who can doubt it ? Here they are at work just as they are elsewhere.”

“ But why choose me for such a foul assault ?” asked Ranulph.

“ Ask you why, my Lord ?” replied Egelbert. “ It is not so much because you hold your livings from the Emperor—not from the Pope. It is not so much because you retain your wife—our noble Lady ; but your pure, unsullied lives, your self-denials, your mercies, reproach these licentious—cruel—rapacious Priests. All this, my Lord,” continued he, “ we, your faithful followers, have seen full long, and, God helping us, we will defend you.”

“ Nay—nay, my Son,” returned the Priest-Count—deeply affected, as he was, both at the fervid devotion of his young esquire, and the applauding voices of his companion and their little troop. “ Nay, Egelbert, I dare offer no resistance to these cruel edicts. I have weighed the matter long and well. My wife, my little ones, the Pope will tear them from me. In this, I dare not resist the Pontiff’s mandate. This day, too, has

convinced me that continue a married priest—and my usefulness is gone for ever.

“But,” added he, and the warm blood mounted to his pale forehead, “the Emperor’s right to invest with German benefices, I will—I can conscientiously—uphold: I will urge, will pray our Sovereign to do the same.”

The effect of such words as these was deeply painful upon the young officers and their soldiery. They had been heard by all,—for intense anxiety had insensibly drawn them nearer than was their custom to their beloved master. Even the bronzed features of the men reddened, as they thought of the indignity cast upon their gentle mistress.

The half broken-hearted Ranulph saw it; and trembling lest their love for Elgitha and himself should explode in oaths and curses upon the High-Priest who had demanded the tears of widowhood, and the cries of orphanage, for his sacrifice, he said still more loudly—

“Dear Egelbert, for the remainder of our ride I must be left alone. A sad, sad trial awaits me on our reaching home. What I do I must do quickly, lest worse befall my wife—my babes—You will all,” he added, as he looked affection-

ately around him, "understand my need of silence."

The men, with their arms lowered, restrained their horses until Ranulph had sufficiently advanced; and then they resumed their journey, without a word.

CHAPTER V.

"Speak, though this soft warm heart, once free to hold
A thousand tender pleasures, thine and mine,
Be left more desolate, more dreary cold
Than a forsaken bird's nest filled with snow
'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine ;
Speak, that my torturing doubts their end may know."

WORDSWORTH.

THE last chapter left Ranulph and his attendants on their near return to his castle.

While he had been absent, during his audience with the Emperor, two of the chambers of that building had been witnesses of agonizing moral tragedies. In one of them, the sobbing, weeping Elgitha now sat in despair upon her fauteuil, with a wild gaze fixed on nothing ; anon rose and paced to and fro, and with frantic gestures ; anon again paused, bending over the calm, happy forms of her sleeping infants. For some moments this last posture soothed her ; but, soon again, the very contrast of their placid rest to the tumult of her own storm-vexed bosom,

only the more clearly disclosed the darkness and fury of the latter. It was then that a paroxysm would have vent in words:—

“ Oh ! Ranulph—dear, holy Ranulph—can’st thou desert Elgitha ? Wilt thou sacrifice these innocents to that cruel, cruel Moloch—Hildebrand ? Ah ! . . . and *is* the voice of the Vicar of our loving Lord at variance with the purest instincts of the heart ? Oh ! Ranulph—Ranulph—wilt thou be unlike Him who sent no child into a cold, homeless world, but took it in his arms and blessed it ?”

And so, long, dreary hours, dragged heavily onward. Her heart beat when the smallest sound reached her ; for she hoped—yet dreaded—that it might be her husband’s step.

But there was another chamber—and with a scene almost as terrible, yet how different !

It was a small oratory. Upon a prie-dieu there knelt the Empress before a Christ upon the Cross.—Her most noble, high-minded face, was suffused with tears, and yet there was no want of heroic purpose in her features. Her lips did indeed move, but there was no sound. Hours on hours did she bend, yet nothing but an occasional increase of paleness, at some sudden noise,

seemed at variance with the most complete abstraction.

There she knelt, crucifying all the feelings of indignation, and revenge, and disgust of a wronged wife towards a wronging husband. The emotions of her youthful love, that had been so cruelly trampled down, were beginning to re-bloom and to send forth their ancient fragrance. Pity—so akin to love—pity for the miseries of that forlorn Henry, to whom she had given her virgin heart; Religion, which—in the presence of her dying Christ—called her to forgive and bless;—both these distilled dews of gentleness upon her spirit.

These all were growing in peacefulness within her, save when some burning blush chased over her royal forehead. Imperial scorn—indignation—rage, then came to tempt her from the meekness of that Cross. With these she struggled—against these she prayed. Once, however, and only once, they would have voice:

“Priest, Pontiff! dares *he*, indeed, to play the despot over Henry? Was he not content to undermine his principles by false, corrupting agents; but must he now aim at the Imperial Crown and Sceptre? Henry, Henry—Woman

as I am, I will help thee to defy him—usurper as he is of the Throne of the Lamb of God !”

It was about this moment that Ranulph attained the castle. Booted, spurred as he was—he felt every second to be so precious for his Sovereigns, that he waved all ceremony, and gave command to his old seneschal to obtain him instant audience with the Empress.

“My lord,” said the silver-haired old man, “there awaits your Lordship an envoy from his Holiness, and he has become imperious in his calls to see you.”

“Then bid him await me still !” answered Ranulph, sternly. “Send some other with my answer. Tell him, Cunibert, to state that I am on Royal business—that once despatched, I will await his pleasure. But do thou, thyself, Cunibert, bear my humble duty to the Empress. Yet tell me, why art thou trembling ? Have I ever before seen thee look so angry ?”

“My Lord, my Lord !” said the usually mild old man, “this envoy, when he challenged at the postern, omitted thy titles ; called thee only the Priest Ranulph. I had near been landing him in yonder moat.”

“Oh ! Cunibert,” replied his master, “and

hast thou, too, forgotten the lesson, "render not railing for railing?"—But do my bidding, I beseech thee."

Ranulph was received on the instant. Most manly though he was, the various, and all of them exciting trials of the day, and, (as if to complete his anxieties,) this ill-omened arrival of the Papal Envoy had well nigh robbed him of self-possession.

None can wonder, then, that, at the sight of his noble countenance, furrowed by grief's ploughshare, and ghastly pale from apprehension, the Empress started:—

"Thou bringest me a fatal verdict from my husband, my Lord Ranulph; otherwise why so careworn, and with such a hue?" she piteously exclaimed. "What! and has he scorned my overtures, as if they were unwomanly and unqueen like?"

"No! most gracious Madam;" he replied. "I had barely uttered to my Royal Master your holy words and proffers, when my grateful ears heard the murmur, 'Bertha, Bertha—wronged Bertha, can'st thou, wilt thou come here? By God's help I will again wound thee—never.' And then—soon as he could absorb

his tears, he bade me 'tell the Empress what has come within thy hearing.' "

The exhausted, unnerved Ranulph shook like an aspen leaf at the impression this produced upon the Empress. Her majesty of habit helped her to control all threatening outbursts of joy—of hope. But her sudden radiant colour, her enlarging eye, the strained muscles of the face—all bespoke her glad, her holy triumph. Alas! how unlike the misery of his own poor riven heart!

That was the moment when the magnanimous young Sovereign sacrificed her joy to sympathy with suffering. "And thou, our loyal Ranulph, art in woe!" she cried. "O! tell me, has aught befallen thee worse than that, if worse there can be, of which this morning thou didst speak to me? Tell me all thy sorrows; and, can we soothe them, then, but not till then, will we give to joy her rights."

"Heed not me nor mine, my Liege," he answered. "Hasten, pray hasten, to my master. Every moment is a crisis for himself and for his crown. But save them, and mine own Elgitha will perish with me, without a murmur."

"Ranulph," said Bertha, solemnly, "thou art

a man, strong in thought and purpose ; whereas I am but a woman. Thou art a holy priest, whereas I am but thy pupil ; yet pardon me : ere I leave thy threshold, I will know each and everything that threatens thee. Dost thou doubt my willingness or my power ? Am I not Cæsar's wife ? On thy fealty, I command thee, hide from me nothing. Yet—to help me better know my power—answer me, first, did Henry promise in *God's help* to shield me from future insults ?”

“ That did he on my priestly honour, gracious Madam. They were his words, they are no version.”

“ Then, Ranulph, I *have* power to save thee and thine. Hast thou not oftentimes told me, Father, that God's help is a rock impregnable ; that that help He will grant, and most assuredly, to those who trust it ? Henry, then, will be faithful to me, and I can aid thee.”

“ Pray now proceed,” she resumed. “ What new peril broods over thee and thy beloved ones ?”

“ Then,” said Ranulph, “ there can be no disguise ! My Royal Mistress, an envoy from Pope Hildebrand has forced himself within my gates ! His very words, on entrance, were those of insult

to my name and to my titles. He demanded, from my servants, for Priest Ranulph ! I understand that evil omen. He bears a papal rescript—it may be my excommunication, unless I cede those functions with which my sovereign has invested me ; unless I sever my marriage-bond, brand Elgitha with dishonour, and starve our babes.”

“ That shalt thou never, my devoted Ranulph,” exclaimed Bertha : and she who had been so self-subdued, in her own joys and sorrows, stood erect, with her eye flashing, and her voice regal in its tone. “ Order me my escort, and with all speed ! I will see the Emperor this very night. *His* ban upon this audacious Legate shall be his blessing upon our second nuptials.”

“ May the King of kings ! may the Father of the fatherless, and the Husband of the widow, bless thee for such a kind and royal thought ;” and the Priest, Husband, Father, raised his imploring hands.

“ But,” continued he, “ no power on earth can save me. Recognize the Pontiff’s right over the investitures of my Sovereign I never will. Divorce my Elgitha, dishonour her and her children’s

name, I never will ; but separate we must. O ! Christ, forgive thy Vicar ! for he knows not what he does."

" Christ's Vicar, is he ?" scornfully cried the Empress. " And in whose investiture has been the Popedom, from age to age, save in that of our Germany Monarchy ? This has not the audacious Hildebrand himself acknowledged for the five minions whom he has ruled with a rod of iron, even while they sat in St. Peter's chair ?* Has he not done this, though in modes as subtle and circuitous as his own serpent-soul ? How gained he Henry's consent to his own Pontificate, but by cajoleries of the Emperor's Envoy ? Pope of the mob is he—not Pope of Holy Church. Hydra is he—fit Head of Mob-dom. Heed him not, Lord Ranulph. Let him excommunicate, if he dare ! His pale must be a herd of wolves, not the fold."

" Much that thou hast said, my daughter," said the Priest, " may be true—most sadly true. And yet his ban is, for the present, irresistible. Let him wreak it upon me, as he has done upon my Emperor, and on myriads of my brethren. For that I care not. But what earthly rock from

* Note (A), at the end of the volume.

this earthly tempest is there for my poor Elgitha and her little ones ? As to myself, my post is at the side of your royal Husband. To him and to my country I have immediate duties to fulfil. This rapacious Pontiff shall never, without my dying protest, make my fatherland his vassal. But whither, O ! whither, can Elgitha fly ?”

“ The great, good God be thanked !” exclaimed Bertha, as she smote her hands with fervour. “ Ranulph, my Lord, I have it. Let this Hildebrand call himself the Suzerain of France ; let him dethrone Solomon of Hungary ; let him govern Corsica, Sardinia, Dalmatia, like a Radamanthus ; let him make the Swede promise, and the Pole pay him feudal tribute ; let even the savage Czar kneel to him ;—but thou knowest that the bold Norman William has sat upon his island shore of England, and has chained the waves of the Pope’s mad ambition. Hast thou not heard William’s answer to Hildebrand’s demand of homage ? ‘ I hold my kingdom of God and of my Sword.’ Hast thou not heard how basely Hildebrand has pocketed his peter-pence, and retired from the field ? Let Elgitha fly to Matilda, this bold Norman’s wife. She, thou knowest, is thine Emperor’s kinswoman ;

and Henry's and my own entreaties will secure for thy beloved ones protection and hospitality."

For the first time, throughout that long and miserable day, did the usually beaming countenance of Ranulph relax from its expression of rigid sorrow. "Then God does make the valley of Achor to be a door of hope," he gently murmured. "Yes," so soon as his emancipated heart could speak, he said, "yes; my royal Mistress has found an ark for my poor chased dove. My Liege, I will, heart and soul, confide her and my children unto thee amid this deluge."

"Then now for action," promptly, joyfully returned the Empress. "I must, I will see Henry this very night. But add some few of thy retainers to my weak escort. Have I, my Lord Ranulph, so often sped with the falcon, and dost thou now fear my horsemanship?"

"Go in God's holy name, and with his blessing," said the noble, anxious Priest: "go; but oh! forget not! Your Highness must urge, aid my Master to propitiate the Pontiff, be it but for the present only. Hide not from your royal eyes, that if he gain not the pardon of his Holiness before the Feast of the Purification, his crown is lost. Urge him, pray him, aid him, gracious Madam,

to forestall his foes, and to seek the presence of the Pontiff ere he can cross the Alps. Let but Hildebrand reach Augsburg, and our Monarch is deposed. Urge him, pray him, aid him to reach Italy, and see Hildebrand. But suffer me to meet this Papal Envoy and see Elgitha, and I am at your and my Emperor's commands, at Spires."

Ranulph, with deep reverence, left the Empress. The royal escort, strengthened by a troop of his own picked men-at-arms, were in almost immediate readiness, and soon they, with their royal charge, were invisible from the turrets of the castle.

CHAPTER VI.

“Woe to the Crown that doth the Cowl obey!”

WORDSWORTH.

“PREPARE thy papers, Bruno,—for I would have thee write,” said an aged man, whose dress showed him to be some ecclesiastic, to a reverend secretary who stood before him, with his arms crossed and with his head bent, as if in the presence of a divinity.

This occurred on the morning of the 29th of January, 1076 (O.S.), in the small Italian town of Vercelli, and in a room so inferior, and of such small dimensions, that an uninformed spectator would have come to a very false conclusion as to the grade of its inmates. Nevertheless, a triple crown which lay upon a velvet cushion beside the speaker, together with a massive gold crosier, might have awakened his suspicions. Add to this, the senior priest wore a countenance of command, intelligence, and conscious power,

such as eclipsed the comparative meanness of the chamber.

The secretary's face was equally characteristic ; only, it more unguardedly betrayed that cunning which could never be discerned, save at intervals, in his superior.

" Art thou ready, Bruno ?" the latter asked impetuously, after a few moments.

" Speak, your Holiness, for thy servant heareth !" said the secretary, as, with pen in hand, he listened.

" Write then :

1. That the Church of Rome owes its foundation to God only.
2. That only the Pope of Rome has a right to be called **UNIVERSAL BISHOP**.
3. That he only can depose bishops or re-institute them.
4. That his legate ought to preside in council over all bishops, even though that legate be of inferior dignity ; and that he can depose them.
5. That the Pope may depose even bishops who are absent.
- 6 That, among other things, no man ought to remain in the same house

with those whom the Pope has excommunicated.

7. That it is lawful for him alone to make new laws, when the times require it ; to found new churches ; to change a canonry into an abbey ; to divide a rich bishopric into two, and to unite poor ones.
8. *That he only can bear the Imperial Insignia.*
9. *That all princes should kiss the Pope's feet, and to him only they ought to pay this honour.*
10. *That his name only* is to be repeated in the Churches.*
11. *That there is no other name but his in the whole World.*
12. THAT HE HATH POWER TO DEPOSE EMPERORS.
13. That he hath power to translate bishops from one see to another, according to necessity.
14. That he can ordain a priest in any church whatsoever.
15. That a priest, ordained by him, can pre-

* See note B.

- side over any other church, and cannot receive preferment from any other bishop.
16. That no general council ought to be held without his order.
 17. That no chapter or book be accounted canonical without his authority.
 18. That his judgment ought to be corrected by no one, and that he only can correct the judgment of others.
 19. *That he is responsible to no one.*
 20. That no person whatsoever dare condemn any one who appeals to the chair of the Apostle.
 21. That the more important causes of every church should be referred to him.
 22. *That the Church of Rome has never erred; can never err: the Holy Scriptures being witness.*
 23. That the Pope of Rome, if canonically ordained, becomes unquestionably HOLY through the merits of Saint Peter—as saith Ennodius, Bishop of Pavia; as is approved of by many holy Fathers; and as is recorded in the Decretals of Pope Symmachus.
 24. That, by his direction and permission, it

is lawful for inferiors to accuse their superiors.

25. That he can depose and re-instate bishops without the sanction of a synod.
26. That no one can be accounted a Catholic who does not agree with the Church of Rome.
27. *That he can absolve from their allegiance all subjects of unjust princes.**

Rapidly, but with trembling awe, the secretary had written these dictations, as if they were the ultimate edicts of a second—a fiercer—Sinai. Conventional in reverence though he was, however, and worldly-minded enough to be the active partizan of dogmas that bade fair to advance his interests, he was, nevertheless, like thousands of his brother ecclesiastics, a profane sceptic at heart. And it gave him malicious joy, albeit not without many a pang of honester compunction, as he bethought himself, while he wrote these edicts, of the laws of his master's Master:—"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted. Blessed

* Baronius. Ann. 1076; No. 31.

are the meek ; for they shall inherit the earth."

" Hast thou written, Bruno ?" demanded the Pontiff.

" I have written, may it please your Holiness !" replied the secretary.

" Then keep thy papers sacredly for our guidance in the coming synod."

This Pontiff was the great but remorseless Hildebrand, Gregory the Seventh—the incarnate ideal of the Papal Church—the admired redresser of her wrongs, avowed reformer of her morals, asserter of her rights, known and unknown. The historian Gibbon is falsely partial when he paints Gregory as a second Athanasius. The lives of Gregory may be, as he says, " either legends or invectives," and, therefore, we would draw no conclusions from them. But his own authenticated letters, which are before us ; his own Papal rescripts, which are still appealed to, as authorities, by the Papal court ; the records still treasured up in the archives of contemporary sovereigns, all these reveal his character. We pass by, as scandalous as they were impossible, those stories of the private life of one over whom a sublime purpose had an inflexibly ab-

sorbing power. But we know him to have been unbounded in the assumption of his prerogative as Pope; aiming to bring within his grasp, and to wield, with irresponsibility, every affection, every thought, every act of serf or freedman, vassal or lord, subject or sovereign, monk, priest, or bishop. We know him to have aimed after this universal empire with a cruelty towards the instincts of high chivalry, of which the thought of the heathen Alexander, in his conduct to Darius, should have shamed him. We know him to have driven his chariot wheels over more sensitive emotions than did Juggernaut even, and as un pityingly. And all this for what? but to become, we say not selfishly, but officially, the head of all things for the Church. He would be what the world called Christ's Vicar upon earth, and his capacious, but inflated, blasphemous ambition would have every knee to bow, and every tongue to confess it, or he resolved to break the remonstrant knee by physical force, or to extort the avowal from the reluctant tongue by threat.

Scarcely had he finished the above dictation to his secretary, when a chamberlain knocked and obtained admission. The Pontiff had just leant

back upon his chair, not from weariness—for his indomitable spirit never knew what it was to be weary—but to revolve over and over again the policy necessary in order to realize his dictates. A smile of scorn came over him, as he thought of churchmen refractory beneath his interdicts of concubinage, or marriage, or simony : they were but miserable flies, in the web of the mighty spider. Soon followed another smile—and it was contemptuous though triumphant—as his mind ran over names of potentate on potentate who had done him homage for their crowns. Pale he grew, however, and his lip quivered in anger, when he recalled the Norman William's insult. As quickly his features regained hope and firmness, blackened by revenge, when his mind's eye fixed upon the Emperor Henry, who had dared to impugn his title ; on whose head he had poured forth his fulminations ; whom he knew to have become an outcast, through his own Papal curse ; and whom he was on the road to Augsburg to depose.

“The Countess Matilda craves an audience with your Holiness !” said the chamberlain, kneeling reverently before the Pontiff.

“My son,” replied the Pope, “thou knowest

that whosoever cometh, I will in no wise cast out. Admit her instantly."

The Countess Matilda, leaving her attendants in an outer apartment, entered, alone, the humble chamber,—one more honourable, in her view, than that of any earthly palace, for, in her belief, it contained Christ's Vicar.

She, too, although there was a crown upon her fair forehead, knelt devoutly at the Pontiff's feet.

"Bless me, even me, Holy Father!" she said, most meekly, and continued: "I would not have dared intrude upon your heavenly meditations, but that the suggestions of your Holiness, yester-even, seem to my poor mind to be of an importance so immediate."

Hildebrand, with unwonted vivacity, blessed the royal suppliant: and never did adoring devotee receive with a deeper awe the holiest unction.

"And now, daughter, be thou seated," said the Pope, "and detail to me thy thoughts and wishes"

Matilda drew a low footstool near to Hildebrand, and taking her seat upon it, still preserved the aspect of a worshipper.

That was a scene most singular ; even to this day it remains inexplicable. The Royal Lady, Sovereign of all Tuscany “in her own plenary and undivided right,” had scarcely attained the age of thirty. True ; upright history warrants us to suppose only that this warm and impassioned woman had become so ideally enamoured of the Popedom that, without the impulse of any more sensuous emotions, she devoted herself, and her wealth, and her great power, to its cause. She who, even to her latest days, showed the same devotion to the then reigning pontiff, may be—ought to be—most charitably judged in her platonic regard for the already aged Hildebrand. Still, the scene before us was most singular : it combined so much that was ecclesiastical in emotion with that indefinite personality of feeling of which the officials in religion have in all ages, and often so perilously, become the objects.

No sooner was she seated than she thus addressed the Pope :—

“ I have bethought me, Holy Father, of the proposal of your Holiness, yester-even. Then, if I recollect aright, you required of me, as a child of the Church, to hold my kingdom in

feoffship to St. Peter's chair. I am prepared to do so. Hast thou not taught me that by thee kings reign and princes decree justice?"

"And thou knowest, daughter," returned Hildebrand, "that this is the word of God,—confirmed, too, by the voice of Fathers and of Councils."

"That I seek not to know," eagerly replied the Countess. "Enough is it for me to listen to thine injunctions, Holy Father. Never did vassal purer, or more loyal, homage to his suzerain than I will do to thee, thou blessed one!"

"Retire, Bruno!" said the Pontiff to his secretary, on whose wily countenance he had instinctively detected an effort to conceal a smile.

No sooner were those two august personages alone, than the astute Hildebrand felt at an ease that gave full play to his influence over his poor, credulous admirer.

"Thou art, my daughter,"—and he spoke most blandly,—"thou art a holy Judith. Thou dost mourn over the waste places of our Zion. Thou dost weep with me that so few come to our holy feasts, and that they who come are so imperious though surrounded by all our sanctities. Then aid me, daughter, and with a royal arm."

“And do I not, my Father?” quickly rejoined the Countess. “Are not all my forces; is not all my treasury, at thy full and thy free disposal?”

“Yea, verily,” said the Pope; “and of this thy largess, daughter, thou wilt repent thee never, for he that giveth to the poor lendeth to the Lord. Dost thou chaffer at the interest that the Lord will pay thee?”

“Oh! forgive, forgive me, gracious Father!” exclaimed the Countess. “Why rebuke thus thy child? Have I, like another Ananias or like Sapphira, withheld ought?”

“Countess Matilda!” said the Pope, “I believe thou wouldest not wittingly lie against the Holy Ghost. Keep, then, of thy portion, nothing back.”

“Father! Holy Father! what wouldest thou have?” asked Matilda, in alarm.

“Give to Christ thine all,” said Hildebrand; but with a brevity and a sternness that made the already agitated Countess quail. “Said I not unto thee, my child, lie not unto the Holy Ghost?”

“Oh! mercy, mercy, Holy Father; wherein have I?” shrieked Matilda.

"Wherein!" returned the Pontiff, and with the severity of consummate art. "Wherein! Hast thou *given* thy possessions unto Christ? What, more than mere lip-service, hast thou proffered? One earthly husband hast thou divorced already; and that justly, holily, I allow. But how knows Christ's Vicar but that thou wilt take another spouse on earth, and defraud thus thy Lord in heaven?"

"Mercy, mercy! Holy Father," again shrieked the Countess. "What wouldst thou have?"

"Daughter," said the Pontiff, rising as if to close the interview, "no man hath left houses or lands for Christ's sake or the gospel's, but shall receive in this world a hundred-fold, and, in the world to come, life everlasting. Thou mayest leave me. Thou dost hesitate?"

"And why not hesitate?" asked the trembling lady. "This morning I have met the peers of my father's realm, and they all—all to a man—refuse it."

"Then, Countess Matilda, thou art no sovereign of the Lord's anointed. What *have* thy peers to do with the disposition of thy will?" demanded Hildebrand.

"Guide me, guide thy poor, weak, blind child,

my Father! I would never, never, never, lie unto the Holy Ghost," faltered out the Countess.

"Then give Christ thine all,—give thy domains, thy seignories, thy castles, monies,—and come, follow me."

Thus spoke the Pontiff, and, with a sign, dismissed the alarmed young Sovereign, who retreated abashed and sorrow-stricken.

CHAPTER VII.

“ Unless to Peter’s chair the viewless wind
Must come and ask permission when to blow,
What further empire would it have ?”

WORDSWORTH.

THE church bells at Brieg were sounding the hour of matins, when a small and apparently common-place party issued from the city gate that led southward. Mean, however, though it was, toward all outward seeming, there was a something about their mode of passage through that municipal frontier-point which was peculiar. The men-at-arms, who stood as sentinels, lowered their partisans in homage. And on the issue of the travellers from the town, and whilst mid-way across the bridge that traversed the moat, sundry persons bade leave to them with forms of reverence which were inexplicable ; paid, as they were, to a company so ill fitted for commanding or receiving them.

This little company was composed simply of a

Pilgrim, who walked on foot, clothed in coarse serge and with his feet in rude sandals, followed by a female, who rode upon a mule with a child in her arms. There were also a few attendants, most of them of an inferior grade, and a few common peasants, whose instruments, upon their shoulders, showed that they were contemplating some difficult travel in the mountains.

The Pilgrim himself walked in front and alone. It could not have escaped the eye of an observer that he was in gait so erect, in look so commanding though downcast, and in stalwart vigour so unimpaired, as that suspicions about his purpose as a devotee were more than questionable. Further, the respectful distance which was kept by his little escort threw around him an air of awe.

“Still thee, still thee, Conrad, love!” was the only sound that broke the sad silence, when the little party had passed to some miles distance, as the tender mother strove to quiet those cries of her child which the bitter frost-wind had awakened.

Suddenly, and with tender life in his mien, in his eye, and in his voice, the Pilgrim turned round, went backward to the woman and her child, and said, but in a low, earnest tone :

"Bertha, dearest Bertha! wronged, but thrice-honoured Bertha! let me bear our child. This warm robe of royalty will comfort him! And do thou, my guardian angel as thou art, enwrap thyself against the rude voices of yon mountain."

"Take thy child Conrad, then, my liege!" answered Bertha. "His heart's little pulses may, if needs be, warm thine own. The saints bless thy heroic daring, O! Henry, thou lovest thy child, — trust in thy wife."

"Bertha, forbear, I implore thee!" replied the Pilgrim. "Surmise not for one moment that my heart is open to a baseness too bad for thought,—and that it would be, did I not now penitently and gratefully love thee and trust in thee as mine own, own Bertha."

He took the child, fondled it, greeted it with tender tones and blithe songs (dreary as was the scene), then wrapped it round with his coarse mantle, carried it with manly ease in his left arm, and, with his right, bravely plied the mountain-staff, as he began to pass a defile that was before him.

Onward, onward the little party struggled, for hours on hours; occasionally, but rarely, stopping to recruit breath during the steep ascent. The

day had more than dawned, and the Pilgrim's eyes could discern the ravine, through which he passed, clothed with pines whose very darkness startles an unconscious traveller, by its contrast to the sun-lit scene above him and around him. He could look upon the fiercely bounding, foaming cascades, that, amid the dread bonds of neighbouring glaciers, seemed to boast their own unrestrained and unrestrainable agility. He could watch the unbroken quietude of those mountain-ranges,—firm, calm, passionless as they were. All this he might have done; and in other and former days would have done. But his eye—the eye of the Pilgrim—noticed none of them, thought nothing of them. Onward, onward, he breasted the ascent, insensible to the burden of his child; until, at last, fairly spent with fatigue, Bertha fainted, and the movements of his escort, to save her from dropping from her mule, recalled him to his outer life.

It was a strange sight, when the pilgrim—avowedly so abstracted from the world—rushed back with the utmost eagerness, gazed upon the pallid female form before him with poignant sympathy, and, while the means were being tried for her restoration, gently placed

the child's lips to the pale cold ones of the mother.

"Wake, my loved Bertha!" he cried, in anguish, "the journey is but just begun. Wake, my Bertha. Oh! for God's sake, wake, wronged, insulted as thou hast been—thou Empress of the Cæsars, wake! thy miserable, fallen Henry, prays to thee."

The little boy, unconscious of his mother's sufferings, yet, nevertheless, quick in his instinct, covered her lips and face with his warm kisses, and, at each, a thrill of life went through her. So too, strange to say, as each piteous cry of remorse and love broke forth from the pilgrim, there was a convulsion in her delicate frame.

"Oh! Henry, Henry, repeat those blessed words, and strength will never fail me."

"Bertha!" tenderly but sadly replied the pilgrim, when the attendants had moved out of hearing, "the Emperor has been false to himself, false to his crown, false to thee, false to his God." He then slowly but resolutely went forward, and stood patiently awaiting the unconstrained movements of his party.

Alas! they had to rest, several nights, beneath shelving rocks. Often and often the child cried,

most mournfully, from cold and from strange food. But Bertha was now happy, for the pilgrim's assurances had given her more than human strength. From day to day, in their ascent, the Alpine iceberg stayed their progress, and either pathways were cut for them, or rope ladders were brought into use. When the latter was the only means of advance, the poor mule was left to perish, and the pilgrim bore in his arms, up the ladder, the child of his and of Bertha's love. Then, meanwhile, the followers of this little force sustained the mother in her difficult climbings.

It was a dread, it was an affecting scene—that of one who was, unquestionably, the father—thus tenderly bearing his babe up through steps of ice, the construction of which he had for hours stood to watch—while at the same time he warmed his child upon his bosom, sang to him dulcet tunes, and—all along—contended for the mastery over thoughts and feelings that raged within his own bosom—thoughts and feelings which he dared not utter either to the rocks and avalanches around him, or in the hearing of his attendants, or even to her who accompanied him.

And when evening surprised them (and suddenly it did surprise them), when this little

group of travellers were beneath some lofty ridge, and when, as they bivouacked in the midst of snows that were made only the more ghastly by the moon-beams, the pilgrim would walk out alone, would now pause in his walk, now step forward with an unnatural earnestness of both gait and step, would murmur, and then, in broken exclamations, give vent to the clamorous passions that were within. He would, occasionally, gain some peak—chrystalline it was—and thence would take a survey, and, as he took that survey, his features would become still more excited, and the voice of his soliloquies still more harsh.

Then he would return to his little group ; finding but one faithful servitor on watch for him, the others all asleep, and, in the inner chamber of their miserable tent, Bertha vigilant and anxious.

At length they reached the summit of their mountainous ascent. It was the hour of mid day. Cold freezing blasts had been sweeping against their faces but a few hours before. They had been but an hour ago struggling with ice, with snow, with fords filled with needles of frosted granite ; whereas now they stood upon a table-land that commanded the richest cham-

paign of fields, of orchards, vineyards, on whose rich and luxuriant level might be seen tall spires of Christian temples, begirt with happy homesteads, in the background of which might be descried the Appenines.

“Here thou shalt repose awhile, dearest Bertha!” said the pilgrim. “Look on yonder strath, thou faithful one! there thou shalt have warmth, and food, and honour, both for thyself and Conrad, such as shall beseem you both, let what will betide my miserable, my degraded self.”

“Ah! speak not so, my Henry, or thou wilt undo me. Thinkest thou, that, in place of our former fortunes, I would not choose the commonest chalet amidst the glaciers that are at our back, provided I have thy love, rather than those old sceptres and crowns of dominion which I wore or held while my heart was breaking because thou hadst abandoned me?”

“Bertha, Bertha, spare me even thy love now, for I must be self-absorbed, or thou and our child will suffer,” said the pilgrim; and he kindly, affectionately, said this—yet he resolutely walked away.

Some hours were spent in repose by the rest of

the little company—the pilgrim taking none. The descent, though they had hoped to find it easier, was far more difficult and perilous than had been their previous climbing. The whole precipitous mountain-slope seemed like one plane of ice, inclined at an obtuse angle. The pilgrim, notwithstanding, was undaunted and led the way, even where the chamois-hunter would have paused. Down he crawled upon his hands and knees, and most of the men of his forlorn escort followed. Accidents there were, not numerous yet enough to terrify, for occasionally a too tremulous foot or finger would lose its hold, and a poor, miserable victim, gliding down the precipice, would by his shrieks and helpless prayers, and the last bound of his mutilated body into a gulf below, send a cold shudder through the breasts of his companions.

And when they had gained a footing, then came a still severer trial to the pilgrim's heart. It was by his suggestion that a portion of his followers should wait upon the summit for the signal—when he should have gained a resting place—and then should carefully lower down the lady and her child. When he gave it, the faithful mountaineers wrapped Bertha and her

babe in the rough skins of beasts that had been slaughtered on the journey and, gradually lowering them down by ropes, placed them at his side. This terrific ordeal had to be repeated often ; and it was appalling to watch the pilgrim's countenance, as the precious burden descended amid sharp spiracles of ice, that, every moment, threatened to sever the frail cords.

At length, however, the party, with but few casualties, reached Domo d'Ossola. And no sooner had they done so, than one of the pilgrim's constant followers, Rudiger, shouted aloud, and in great excitement, " Long live the Emperor !"

Before we proceed farther, it may be well for us to mention that the Emperor, after having remained at Spire for two months since his reunion to the Empress, had yielded to her own and to Ranulph's urgent prayers, to seek the presence of Pope Hildebrand, and to obtain, at any cost, the withdrawal of the Papal ban. This Henry felt to be of the highest moment, for so astutely had the Pontiff contrived his measures, that, calculating upon the physical impossibility (so he thought it) of the Emperor reaching Italy at such a time, he felt sure of obtaining his deposition at Augsburg, in the early spring.

The incidents which are recorded by history as having occurred to the young Emperor during his journey from Spire to the little town where the commencement of this chapter finds him, are fraught with interest. But the compass of our tale will allow us to enumerate only some few of them.

The route which he selected was through Burgundy. At Besançon he halted to observe the festival of Christmas. Thence passing the Jura, he advanced to Vevay, on the borders of Lake Lemman. But here an obstacle, that threatened to be insurmountable, sprang up before his path ; for his own mother-in-law—Adelaide by name—barred his passage, save on conditions that he surrendered to herself and to Asmadeus her son, large investitures. The Emperor yielded, on necessity, and then followed that passage across the Alps, which we have been describing.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ Mercy and love have met thee on thy road,
Thou wretched Outcast, from the gift of fire
And food cut off by sacerdotal ire,
From every sympathy that man bestowed.”

WORDSWORTH.

THE Pilgrim of whom we have spoken was Henry the Fourth of Germany,—afterwards, and deservedly, called Henry the Great. We have already watched the painful preliminaries of that course which brought him into collision with the astute and insatiable ambition of Pope Hildebrand, in which the latter acted with a policy which, be it remembered, has, from his time forth, been the dominant principle of the Papacy.

Hildebrand *practically* assumed not merely a spiritual but a temporal pre-eminence above all the sovereigns of the world. Wise he was—supposing that he looked to the advancement of his own personal popedom only. But unwise and infatuate was he, supposing that he looked forward, in anticipation of the rule of his government over

the future masses of mankind ; for although man allows his indignation to slumber for years, —it may be for centuries—yet, when it bursts out, the tornado is but the more tremendous. And Hildebrand did succeed in the erection of his papal edifice. He did say, “my mountain standeth fast, it shall never be moved.” But he erred, from his forgetting the analogies of nature. There may be built, even upon a granite rock, the fairest of this earth’s temples ; and the site may be motionless for ages whilst, unseen, undreamt of, the volcanic fires may be in gradual condensation. Such is the papacy that he built.

We cannot yield to a man that was so cruel, so remorseless in his cruelty, so proud, and so unforgiving, the high honour of having entertained a large-minded, unselfish principle. And, at the same time, we dare not, in historical truth, affirm that he was under the *sole* guidance of a wish to aggrandize himself. Human nature so often comes before us with the vast in purpose and the little in feeling, that we would shrink from dogmatizing upon this point in the character of Hildebrand. All that we will and can say is this—that Damocles never held over his victim a sword with a more studious or fastidious poise ;

that Draco never looked more unpitifully upon the sufferers from his laws ; that Napoleon never entertained more enlarged or pitiless projects of temporal dominion.

And it must not be forgotten that this breath of the animus of the Papacy has had successive and continuous respirations. The form which it has animated has grown ; it may have passed through varied stages of infancy, and boyhood, and manhood (witness the times of Sextus V. and Innocent) ; it may now have, as its incorporation, a bloated, flaccid, indolent, yet impulsive mass ; yet still it is alive and wakeful, claiming the sovereignty over the mightiest princes, though the mouth by which it utters its demands is toothless, though the look of its aspiration is blear-eyed, though the arm by which it extends its crosier is as tremulous as its blow is powerless.

The calculating but vindictive policy of Hildebrand was that which the poor young Emperor had to meet. This monarch, casting off the slough-skin of his early indolence and presumption, arose in the attitude and with the resolve of retrieving his position and his character. Young though he was in years—only twenty-seven—he had been taught, by shame and defeat, the im-

portance of foresight, and deliberation, and self-reserve. During that long, and comparatively solitary, passage of the Alps, which we have described in the previous chapter, he matured the plan that he had resolved upon at Spires, of obtaining, at whatever cost of humiliation, the withdrawal of the Pope's anathema. For this he prepared himself to make every *personal* concession that was possible. Meanwhile, however, he retained, and in the most deadly energy, the *arriere pensée* of vengeance.

It did, indeed, take him by surprise, that, though cowardly deserted by courtiers who had fed upon his favour—by ecclesiastics, for the validity of whose investitures, by himself, he had been so daring against Rome—and by warriors, to whom he had given fiefs, and against whose displacement he had so sternly protested ; that though he, the Emperor of the West, had been left to cross the iceberg, and to dare the avalanche, without one friend to his person save the faithful Ranulph, or a fitting aid for his wife and their infant heir, he no sooner presented himself in Lombardy than an army of liege and enthusiastic soldiers raised his banner. The proudest church men, likewise, took anew their fealty to their

excommunicated Sovereign; for they cursed, within their hearts, the bitter ferocity of Christ's Vicar. Barons, bold and powerful, crowded around their Monarch, as his body-guard. The whole people burst forth into one long, loud, note of indignation against the Pope, for his audacious seizure of that temporal sceptre of the Cæsars to which his Chair had been indebted for its pre-eminence.

But the young Emperor's thoughts and purposes were too profound to be borne away even by such grateful incense. Ranulph was ever near him, to urge the policy of obtaining the Pontiff's absolution. No display of troops, no ardent partisanship of the Lombard clergy, no fierce defiances, in his favour, of barons bold, could pervert the Emperor from his purpose; for his strong-minded councillor and friend was at his side.

"My Liege," said Ranulph, one evening, after a large and enthusiastic levee had retired, "My Liege, these men are faithful—honest, I believe; but let thy servant pray thee to measure, well and surely, the foes whom they would confront on thy behalf. Doth my Sovereign feel cold within his mail because the curse of the Pontiff is upon

him? Feel I not so myself? And—bating each and every reason otherwise—dare we attempt the trial of arms? First propitiate the Pope, my Royal Master, and then to arms! Churchman though I am, if my sovereign will but recal the scene of Rosbach, he will not, I trust, deem me craven.”

“Ranulph,” said the Monarch, “as to thine own self-defence, what boots it? Recollect I not well and thankfully thy good stout mace, that then saved thy Master? And now for our present duties. There is my sainted Bertha counselling me, amid this brave, proud host, still to kneel before this audacious priest!”

“Kneel, kneel to him, my most gracious Sovereign!” said Ranulph. “Kneel to him, let me implore thee! Thou shalt have chains wherewith to bind this frightful devastator of Christ’s fold; but while we forge them, let thy servant pray thee to be patient and submissive. And then Gregory, sharp-sighted as he is, and let him be, may awake some morning, and find, to his surprise, that others can enchain him.”

“Ranulph, I will go! God help me! But my men, my nobles, what will they say?”

CHAPTER IX.

“ Black demons hovering o’er his mitred head,
To Cæsar’s successor the Pontiff spake ;
Ere I absolve thee, stoop ! that on thy neck
Levelled with earth this foot of mine may tread.”

WORDSWORTH.

WHILE the events recorded in the previous chapter were occurring, earnest and anxious movements had been adopted and carried out by the Pope Hildebrand and the Countess Matilda, both of which we left at Vercelli. On the next day after that memorable interview which we have detailed between the Pontiff and the Princess, and, as the latter was in the act of ceding to the Papal See the entire of her dominions, in the event of her death, and as the rapacious priest was exulting in his success over the fears and credulities and blind devotedness of the woman, both of them were startled by a messenger’s alarm, that the Emperor Henry was in Italy, and at the head of a numerous and enthusiastic force. The Pope had been calmly,

but with triumphant confidence, arranging his *apostolic* plans for deposing the young monarch so soon as he arrived at Augsburgh. The Countess—the head of his body-guard—had, but a few hours before, held council with her officers upon their approaching passage of the Alps, but without a thought that that journey would be molested.

The news, therefore, of the proximity of their foe—the additional and aggravating statement that, instead of being forlorn and powerless, as they knew him to have been at Spire, he was now the leader of a mighty and devoted host, made Hildebrand grow pale with mortification—not with cowardice, for he knew no fear—while it made the cheek, and eye, and forehead of Matilda kindle with the fury of an Amazon.

“Let us retire, and that right speedily, to Canossa, Holy Father!” said the Countess. “It is mine own mountain fortress, and well I ween that even this arch-rebel Henry can never scale it.”

This proposal was adopted, and for days, embosomed in the Appenines, surrounded by a court of the highest fame in arms and literature, Gregory the Seventh listened wistfully for rumours about his enemy Henry.

The monotony of one of those days was relieved by the arrival, from Germany, of numerous lords and bishops. The bold barons had laid aside their mailed armour, their swords, their casques ; the bishops had left behind them their rich stoles and crosiers. All of them knelt before the haughty Pontiff, and, in the coarse guise of penitents, humbly implored his absolution for their past fealty to their sovereign.

“ Absolution ? never ! ” exclaimed this meek minister of the meek and lowly Christ. “ Absolution ? never ! ’till I know your honest truthfulness of sorrow. Have you not,” continued he, “ dared to resist God’s Vicar in his power to bind and loose ? Hence, men of Belial, you shall have cells for oratories, and bread and water for your food, and *then*—but I *will* have penitence, for ye have sinned against God—*then* I may pardon you if you renounce your accursed king.”

But, at last, a day of an excitement far, far more stirring, came. Seated on a temporary throne ; with the Countess Matilda upon a stool much lower ; with peers and officers girding him around ; anxious, every moment, for the reports of scouts as to the progress of the Emperor and his army ;

a grim smile, which was anything but holy, overspread his face, when a message from a warder reached him, that his foe was ascending the rocky path towards the citadel, alone, and without armour,—nay, clad in the thin white vestment of a penitent, barefoot, and with ashes upon his head.

“ Ah !” murmured Hildebrand, but with malignant glee : “ Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.”

“ Raise the drawbridge, and let the recreant await our pleasure !” said the Pontiff, after a short pause.

It was painful, yet honourable to human nature, to observe the exclusive isolation into which this monstrous arrogance threw the Pontiff. Even Matilda—soul-subjected though she was by his priestly power—shuddered ; for a monarch, the greatest of earth’s monarchs, was being thus degraded. Stern, hard-featured warriors stood passive, but the red glow upon their cheeks told how fearful was their hardly-repressed indignation. Some few sleek sycophantic ecclesiastics did, indeed, smile assent, but they grew the paler as they did so.

“ What !” cried Hildebrand, with unwonted

loudness, as his discerning eye caught the dissentient feeling—"What! Countess Matilda, and ye men-at-arms—ye soldiers of the Church, will ye tremble or be flushed because the prophecy is fulfilled, "His enemies shall lick the dust?"

"It was towards the end of January, the
"earth was covered with snow, and the moun-
"tain streams were arrested by the keen frost of
"the Apennines, when, clad in a thin penitential
"garb of white linen, and bare of foot, Henry,
"the descendant of so many kings, and the ruler
"of so many nations, waited without the gates,
"The rising sun found him there fasting; and
"there the setting sun left him stiff with cold,
"faint with hunger, and devoured by shame
"and ill-suppressed resentment. A second day
"dawned, and wore tardily away, and closed, in
"a continuance of the same indignities, poured
"out on mankind at large in the person of their
"chief, by the Vicar of the meek, the lowly, and
"the compassionate Redeemer. A third day came,
"and still irreverently trampling on the heredi-
"tary lord of the fairer half of the civilized
"world, Hildebrand once more prolonged till
"nightfall this profane and hollow parody on

“ the real workings of the broken and contrite
“ heart.” *

At length, the scene both without and within the fortress became appalling to even the remorseless Vicar of Christ. Crowds—as he admits in one of his own letters—who had stood aghast at the sight of the shivering, half-starved monarch, began indignantly to murmur against the harshness of his apostolical severity : some called it (and most justly) the cruelty of a fierce tyrant. This took place without the castle. Meanwhile, *within* it, his fair and powerful devotee Matilda, Adelaus the Count of Savoy, the Abbot of Clugny—these and others, spent their time, and tears, and strength, in supplication for the humiliated monarch.

Hard-hearted, proud, vindictive, must Hildebrand have seemed to each and all of these suitors on behalf of Henry. But what policy sustained him in this wicked implacability ? What, but that of forcing the poor monarch to authenticate his—Hildebrand’s—right to the Papal chair ? a throne of which he had so illegitimate a tenure.†

Hildebrand, at the beginning of his pontifi-

* Note C.

† Note D.

cate, felt that he was an usurper. The laws of his own See, the laws of Europe, placed the right of investiture for the Popedom in the hands of the German Emperor. Precedents, obligations, all confirmed this form of tenure. But as this proud, self-created Vicar of God, this pious ecclesiastical agitator, had obtained merely the votes of the "Quirites," he resolved, "per fas et nefas," to acquire the seal and superscription of the Emperor. In this he had succeeded, by his wiles. But he had overreached himself,—and the undeceived young Monarch had cancelled his appointment.

It was on the second evening, after the inmates of the castle at Canossa had known, and but too painfully, the miserable posture and condition of the Cæsar without their gates, that the Countess Matilda,—upon whose temporal arm, be it remembered, the vaunt and insolence of the Papal Throne was depending,—meekly, but with tears, approached our Redeemer's professed vicerent.

"Be merciful, Holy Father, be merciful! Oh! let thine unworthy daughter pray thee! Oh! be merciful. Snow, hail, bleak winds, hunger, thirst, shame, sorrow, have for thirty-six hours

been beating upon thine Imperial Penitent. Ah ! if thou triest monarchs thus”

“ Silence ! silence ! I command thee !” said Hildebrand, “ or ”—opening a vellum missal—he continued, “ I will excommunicate thee likewise.”

“ Then name me with her !” said the Count of Savoy ; his bold yet generous face flushed with indignation. “ Name me with her, may it please your Holiness, if you dare !”

“ My Lord, and Brother in Christ,” very quietly said Hildebrand to the Abbot of Clugny, “ ‘ Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing ? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against his Anointed, saying, Let us break their bonds asunder, and cast away their cords from us.’ Shall we not, ought we not, to bind these cords the tighter ?”

The Abbot replied nought. Indeed, he but barely performed the accustomed reverence.

The little party withdrew, and soon afterwards the chafed yet self-constant Hildebrand betook himself to his sleeping chamber.

It happened that that chamber—he had selected it himself—was in the very front of the fortress ;

and, ere he lay upon his couch of down, wrapped in folds of wool, such as could sustain his comfort although snows and glaciers breathed around him, he listened, but at first he heard no groans or sighs from the miserable Imperial penitent, for his big, mighty heart communed only with itself. But he heard this—and it made the Pope tremble—such as he had never done when seated among princes.

“ My Liege—my Sovereign Master—thou King of the Romans—Emperor of our great Fatherland, bear up awhile. What are these frost-biting winds ? Thou shalt have the warm, deep-drawn, loving breath of myriads on thy return to home ! What are these cold stones, or snow-clad steps ? Thou shalt march up, and boldly, to seat thyself beneath thine own royal dais.”

“ Miserere Domine !” prayed the half-fainting Emperor. “ Have mercy upon me, O God ! According to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions !”

“ My Master—my Royal Master—forgive thy faithful Ranulph. I have watched thy steps ; I have waited when thou didst wait. I have taken no bread when thou wast hungry. I have drunk no water when thou wast athirst. But look upon

me, and with one glance only, if thou canst do no more. Ah! Great God! can this be ordered by Him who when he was reviled reviled not again?"

"Miserere Domine!" prayed the Monarch, still bending before the gates. A frightful snow-drift dispersed the appalled, pitying lookers-on, and the Emperor was left alone. Still he cried, "Miserere Domine! Have mercy upon me, O Lord, for I am weak! O Lord, heal me; for my bones are vexed! My soul is sore vexed; but thou, O Lord, how long?"

The Pope—the professed Vicar of a loving God—the avowed exponent of the infinite gentleness of Christ our Lord—this man, the ideal of the Roman Papacy—this man, the first man bold enough and insolent enough to organize her claims to temporal authority over temporal princes—this man, who, if he had possessed the commonest Christianity, would have been upon his knees crying, "Forgive me my trespasses, as I forgive them that trespass against me;"—this man was listening, and with the avidity of malice, to the poor follower of the Emperor, as he strove to sustain his master in what he thought was a holy courage; and the

plaints of the frozen, fainting Cæsar, became to him—this Vicar of Christ—a delicious and soporific serenade.

But before he flung himself upon his couch, Hildebrand's wily and never forgetful eyes singled out the noble Ranulph, who had so self-denyingly, with such perseverance, and with such perilous daring, accompanied the footsteps of his Imperial master

The next morning, after the Pontiff had enjoyed his own night's sleep, and when the dawn broke, he looked out from the lattice of his chamber, and beheld the Emperor still kneeling ; and he could even hear his prayers. Crowds were gathering ; the women of these crowds were unmeasured in their sympathy for the sufferer ; the men, so saw the keen-eyed Pope, were more than restless, and swords and daggers could be descried, and, meanwhile, the wearers of them were more ruthless than was their wont.

“ Miserere Domine ! ” plaintively, but very weakly—for he had lost all strength,—prayed the Sovereign.

“ Now, in God's name, will ye bear all this ? ” shouted aloud a young man among the crowd.
“ My men, tell me, will ye bear all this ? Shall

a sovereign, shall the sovereign of great Germany, be kept here, worse off than can be the commonest penitent, for two nights, three days, in cold, in snow, in nakedness, in thirst, in hunger, in shame, in sorrow, and that merely to gratify this arrogant though clever priest of Holy Church? Down with your necks, my men!" cried the indignant agitator (but he had truth upon his side, agitator though he was). "Down with your necks, my men! they will be scant enow for Gregory! The neck of an Emperor is not sufficient for his footstool!"

The Pope heard all this, and, we must allow, it shook him. Still, he continued obstinate and unrelenting. No! he would accord a gracious answer to no one prayer, came it from countess, or prince, or noble, or plebeian.

How much longer the prostrate Monarch might have persevered in his terrible humiliations, if he had been allowed to perform his penances in solitude, we cannot say. He felt that his very crown was the great stake. He felt, moreover, that if now he failed of obtaining ghostly pardon, his future fell revenge might be disappointed, and for ever. What then cared he for days of anguish as the price?

But his proud soul could not brook the pity of the mob, generous though was its sympathy, and with a heart bursting through its own efforts to repress its rage, the unhappy Monarch tore away his knees from the ice that had congealed around them, rose, and fled to a convent that was at hand.

“Ah!” murmured an aged monk who had been weeping at a scene so horrible, and over a cruelty so fierce and unrelenting—“Ah!” he murmured, looking towards the fortress that contained the Pontiff—“If ye do not forgive, neither will your Father which is in Heaven forgive you your trespasses.”

CHAPTER X.

“Amazement strikes the crowd ;—while many turn
Their eyes away in sorrow, others burn
With scorn, invoking a vindictive ban
From outraged nature.”

WORDSWORTH.

THE excitement in the Castle of Canossa, upon the Emperor's indignant withdrawal from its gates, was terrible. The great Countess, without whose protection Hildebrand would have been almost defenceless,—she, who, as we have already stated, had been beguiled by his villanous artifices to make over all her realms to the Holy See,—was beginning to be alarmed at the uncontrollable despotism of the Pontiff over her brother sovereign, and to feel more than pique at that Pontiff's rejection of her suit on behalf of the humbled Henry. The courtesy which the assembled Tuscan barons showed to Hildebrand was so studiously frigid, that the decrepit, ferocious old

man began to be concerned. As to whatsoever his ecclesiastics thought or felt, he cared nothing.

"Most Holy Father!" prayed the Countess, as she obtained an audience with him, "let me afresh implore thy Holiness, on the poor, fallen Emperor's behalf! He has left our gates. Perchance he deems the Holy Father to be merciless. O! mayest thou bethink thee that a Sovereign, such as he, and mortified as he must, and with a host of warriors such as are within his call, may soon become formidable to you."

"Daughter!" replied the Pontiff, "though a host encamp against me, I will not fear; and though war should rise against me, yet in this will I be confident."

"Then your Holiness shall be confident solely in yourself," said the Count of Savoy, grimly. "I and my father have drawn this good sword in the cause of truth and mercy. Go back!" he cried, as he sheathed his weapon, "thou art no slaughter-knife. Ulric," added he, turning to an officer, "give command to my troops to seek the banners of the Emperor! I will follow instantly."

"Though all men should forsake thee, O

Christ, yet will I not deny Thee," meekly replied the Pope, raising his eyes to heaven.

The old warrior summarily left the chamber, and there was a dead pause.

It was broken, however, after some minutes of painful silence, by the Abbot of Clugny, whose age, whose high character, whose rank at Clugny (where Hildebrand had been himself Monk and Abbot), gave him the highest influence with the Pope.

"Forgive us our trespasses," he said, gently, "*as* we forgive them who trespass against us!"

"Then, brother!" exclaimed Hildebrand in fury,—and his Holiness made the very table, on which he leant, tremble with his rage,—“then, brother, thou, too, art false to the Lord’s vicerent?”

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy!" rejoined the Abbot, with an undisturbed calmness.

The Pope leant back upon his chair. That face, "from the terrible glance of which the eye of every beholder recoiled as from the lightning," became marble both in its hue and its expression. The anxious, loving Matilda, grew as pale, in awe and in anxiety at the fearful paroxysm.

“Him that cometh to me, I will *in no wise* cast out,” quietly, yet firmly, said the Abbot, laying especial emphasis upon the words which we have engraven in italics.

“I will see the ex-Emperor,” at length murmured Hildebrand; yet the mere word “ex-Emperor” betokened his unrelenting pride and pitilessness.

If an observer could have dispassionately watched the interview of the Pope and Emperor, which took place some hours after, he would have speculated much upon their countenances. The Pontiff’s face was studiously inexpressive, in so far as his mighty spirit could make those haughty and stubborn features become expressionless. As to the young, wan, and wasted Emperor, the case was different. It is true that he had power and policy enough to enable him to conceal, even from the eye of Hildebrand, any prospective feeling. But, as he knelt, still retaining his garb as Penitent,—that garb which was still covered with the pendent icicles that even the hard-hearted frost had wept, as tears, upon his degradation; as he plaintively uttered the words “Miserere Domine,” the spectator, such as we have supposed, would have said within himself:—

“ High, proud doings are these, i’ faith. Meek Lamb of God, whose kingdom is not of this world, is this thine holy and infallible ambassador? This Henry may have wronged thy servant; may have traduced him; may have vowed his ruin; but hast Thou sanctioned him and others of thy disciples to forego thine own example when thou allowedst an accursed Herod and a time-serving Pilate to pass unscathed?”

The Emperor Henry knelt, weeping, before Hildebrand. Still there was a pause, and again the Countess Matilda, who had flung herself beside the prostrate Monarch, raised her tearful eyes, in entreaty, to the Pope. And again, soldiers, iron-grey and scarred in the service of the Church, bent the knee before Christ’s Vicar. The false, heartless priests moved not; they were too craven.

“ Miserere Domine!” cried the Emperor; but his cry was scarcely audible. “ Miserere Domine!” was echoed, but in tones more firm somewhat; they came from the lips of Ranulph, whose incautious fidelity to his Royal Master had led him within the den of the insatiate tyrant.

The eye of the Pontiff quickened, at that low

sound, into the glare of the basilisk : he looked, but said nothing.

“Miserere Domine !” afresh cried the Emperor ; and, but for his apparently unaffected earnestness, and the, as apparently, unaffected solemnity of the Pope, the scene would have become most ludicrous.

“Henry,—poor, miserable, weakminded, vacillating man, ex-Emperor of Germany, ex King of the Roman people, thou impious traitor against St. Peter and the Lord,—whence and why comest thou now hither ?” demanded Hildebrand.

“Henry ! Henry ! be calm and patient !” whispered Matilda ; for she could not prevent her eyes from rising at this insufferable insolence of the Pontiff ; and she saw the blood, even as it mounted, upon the forehead of the Cæsar.

“Miserere Domine !” was all that the young Sovereign could or would reply.

“Henry of Franconia, hear me ! hear God’s Vicar ! Art thou to be told now that my mission is ‘to bind kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron ?’ And thou didst dare, didst thou, to depose me, thy Christ, thy God ? And now wherefore this humble and factitious guise ?”

"Miserere Domine!" again prayed the suppliant, clasping his hands.

"Henry of Germany,—I, by whom kings reign and princes decree justice, will receive thee back to mine omnipotent grace and favour,—but only on this one condition. . . ."

The Emperor Henry raised his eyes wistfully and thoughtfully.

"Thou shalt swear thus," said Hildebrand:—
"I, King Henry, in consequence of the dissatisfaction and disloyalty which the archbishops, and bishops, dukes, earls, and other princes of the German Empire entertain towards me, swear to observe, within that realm, as marked by the Sovereign Pope Gregory, both the laws of justice he may determine, and the principles of good fellowship and peace that he may institute. Further, if the Sovereign Pope Gregory, while in Italy, should wish to pass into other lands, I pledge him safe conduct, to the utmost of my power." * Wilt thou swear thus?"

"I swear, your Holiness!" answered the Emperor. Eyes there were upon him, many and eager. Some of those who looked and listened turned off as with a sickening sorrow. Others

* Note G.

smiled. Some few looked grave, yet confident, for they thought they fathomed the purposes of the Sovereign, whose moral sense must have implacably recoiled at this selfish, tyrannous claimant of Almighty God's irresponsibility.

"Thou wilt swear, Henry?" re-asked Hildebrand.

"I will swear!" replied the Emperor.

"Then, reverend brother, we will all together approach Christ's altar; do thou furnish for us the holy sacrifice," said the Pope to the Abbot of Clugny. "One half hour hence, and we will meet thee."

That half hour soon passed away. The chapel of the castle had assumed even a more gorgeous appearance than was its wont. While the bell was calling, there crossed its threshold, first the Pontiff, then Matilda, then the suites of both.

But where was the Emperor Henry?

He was kneeling upon that threshold. As yet, God's Church for the poor and broken spirit was denied to him. Oh! had our Divine Redeemer been there present, with what infinite love and pity had he not welcomed the penitent to his arms! assuming that His knowledge of the inner

man had been no greater than was that of His professed Vicar. But Pope Gregory, suspecting nought of simulation in the Emperor,—or, even if he did, suppressing his suspicion,—entered the church, seated himself beside the altar, listened to and observed the service, and just before the words of consecration of the host,—while the Countess, her attendants, and many others, were humbly kneeling before the proposed sacrifice,—commanded, and in his loudest voice—

“Open, ye everlasting doors, and let the royal penitent come in !”

The valves of the church portal opened, and the wretched-looking Sovereign entered, but with a bowed head.

He knelt before the altar. Hildebrand ascended some few of that altar's steps. Then, taking on his finger what he called the very body of our Redeemer, and ere he placed it on his tongue, he thus addressed his penitent :—

“In the name of the Holy Apostle St. Peter, from whom I have the keys both to bind and to unloose, I unloose thee, Henry, Emperor of Germany and King of Rome. I, the Vicegerent of Almighty God, re-invest thee with thy robes of imperial office under me, and with thy crown and

sceptre, upon our aforesaid conditions. And, be ye witnesses," he said, turning to the congregation,—“Thy sins I remit. Go and sin no more.”

The Emperor was in the act of rising,—and with somewhat of joyous impatience we must admit,—when the Pope sternly added:—

“But to these preliminaries, hear thou! By this, Christ’s body,”—and he held forth the wafer on his finger,—“by this I obtest, in the face of Almighty God, and of his Son, of the holy mother of our Lord, and of his saints, that I am guiltless of thy charges. Wilt thou—and by a like appeal—say of thyself the same?”

“Most Holy Father!” returned the Monarch, “I am wont to hold long days of self-questioning before I take such symbols. Guilty sinner as I am, and unprepared, I dare not. Will thy oath prove thine innocence, Holy Father?”

“Dear child of God! thou regenerated Henry!” answered the Pope, “do as thou list!”

Hildebrand partook the sacrament alone. And the trumpets sounded, as tokens of conciliation, and both parties left in preparation for the festival that ensued.

CHAPTER XI.

“ Who is the honest man ?—
He that doth still, and strongly, good pursue ;
To God, his neighbour, and himself, most true,
Whom neither force nor fawning can
Unpin, or wrench from giving all their due.”

GEORGE HERBERT.

IN the course of the scene of the last chapter, Hildebrand had conveyed secret instructions for the surreptitious arrest of the Priest-Count Ranulph. This invasion of his person neither surprised nor alarmed the latter, but it caused him the gravest sorrow ; for he was well aware that his counsel and his presence were, now more than ever, of importance to his Sovereign. A suspicion of this, in the mind of the crafty Pontiff, may have induced his order. Moreover, there was his own personal irritation against Ranulph, both on account of his brave and holy resistance to the High Priest's claims, and because of his indefatigable fidelity to the cause of Henry.

During the long, and to him most revolting,

banquet, in which the Pope had treated the anewly christianized Monarch with a forced courtesy and blandness such as the lowest gentleman must have scorned,—during all this, the eye of the Emperor looked wistfully for his friend, yet he saw him not. Aroused, however, to thought and policy, he said nothing.

But the next day, and—after this factitious revelry was closed—and when the Emperor was far away (for he had left early, in order to rejoin his troops, eager to place himself in command with a head that had been absolved), Ranulph was summoned from his cell into the presence of his Holiness.

“Ranulph of Wartzburg,” said Hildebrand to his prisoner, “I have detained thee here. Not, my son,” he added, blandly, “with aught of wish or purpose but such as concern that holy church of which thou art a minister.”

“May it please thy Holiness to speak further!” said the Count, reverently. “I am but the subject of my *absolved* master: and to him, and to him alone, can my poor body be responsible. May I humbly, but firmly, demand the reason of that poor body’s foul imprisonment?”

“Then even thou—thou a professed priest of

Christ—questionest Christ's authority?" angrily asked the Pope.

"Not so, may it please your Holiness," replied Ranulph; "but I have yet to learn that I, a subject of his Imperial Majesty, am, in body, the creature of any other earthly sovereign."

"Art thou not my servant, mine aide,—sworn in fealty to obey mine utterances as Christ's Vicar's?" asked Hildebrand.

"I am but the subject of Cæsar, and I know no fealty temporal save to him," he answered.

"Temporal? temporal? always that hated but cunning distinctive word! Am I, or am I not, thy master?"

"My Holy Father, surely!" returned Ranulph, "and no more faithful heart hast thou in Christ's Church; thy spiritual commands are laws upon my conscience; what spiritual thoughts or edicts may have the expression of thy Holiness, I love, and reverence, and observe. But pardon me, your Holiness, I know of no *civil* laws but those sanctioned by my Sovereign."

"Then thou darest, dost thou!" exclaimed Hildebrand—and his ever terrific eyes glared with an unwonted fierceness—"thou darest question the

divine tenure of our Holy See? Thou art a heretic, art thou? against the grant of the Eternal—‘I will give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven?’ When the Lord gave to the blessed St. Peter, in especial, this authority, what human being, what thing on earth, did he except from that authority? Deny that thou canst not be bound by the power of the Church, and thou deniest that that Church can absolve thee.* Deny this continently, and thou art excommunicate from Christ,” said the Pontiff, waxing in such fury that his voice became indistinct from passion.

He stopped awhile. The little audience was too absorbed in awe at the paroxysm of the Holy Pontiff to leave them power to think upon his speech. Such was the terror felt at the authority of the Papal Chair, and such the belief in the divinity of its fulminations, that, to a man, all looked round upon the assailed Ranulph, expecting the descent of the forked lightning upon his devoted head.

He, however, stood calm, but deadly pale.

* Note H.

Large-minded though he was, and brave as the steel of the sword of his noble house, and unswerving in his loyalty to his sovereign, and in his resolve to uphold that sovereign's temporal prerogative, his heart smote him at the Pope's words, "deny this continently, and thou art excommunicate from Christ." His lips moved, yet not from scorn at the threats of the Pontifical tiger, but in lowly prayer, "Teach me to do thy will, O God! Thy spirit is good, lead me into the land of uprightness."

It would seem that, as in the case with all passions when opposite and counter, the gentleness and quietude of Ranulph only fanned the flame in Hildebrand.

The Pope actually rose from his chair, and, losing all sense of dignity, with one hand clenched and extended, he cried,—“Is there even any royal dignity that should not be subjected to my sacerdotal sceptre,—that which the providence of the Omnipotent has ordained for his own honour, and given in mercy to the world? Is not his Son, God-Man, as the great High-Priest, and head of all priests, seated at the right-hand of the Father, where he ever intercedes for us; who looked down upon this temporal world, when its children raged, and, of his own will, went to the priesthood

of the cross? Who dare doubt that the priests of Christ are the lords and fathers of kings and princes, and of all the faithful? Know you it not to be a miserable insanity for a child to strive to subject his father, or a disciple to direct his master? And what accursed blasphemy, to aim to restrict me, by whom, not on earth only, but in Heaven also, all things can be loosed or be bound!" *

"Art thou dumb still, thou recreant?" said Hildebrand, in a tone which, by physical re-action, had become low and deep. That tone was far more terrible than had been the recent high one. It was soul-thrilling to catch the sounds of his grating teeth.

"Your Holiness does most wrongly misinterpret my words and conduct," at length replied Lord Ranulph. This he said, with his tall, majestic figure raised, but without one movement of presumption, to its fullest height. His fair, open, ingenuous countenance, and his blue Saxon eye, were in strong contrast to that olive complexion, those parchment features, and that restless, scintillating glance of the Pontiff, which his own historians give the latter.

* Note I.

"May it please your Holiness,"—began Ranulph—"no one, not my own thoughts, can charge me as disloyal to your sacred sceptre. But as thou hast set me here on trial, and dost demand my answer, may I pray thee hear me?" . . .

"Have I not been taught, your Holiness, and in the words of the sacred Pontiff, Gregory the First, that he who claims the supremacy of 'Universal Bishop,' is our Divine Lord's Antichrist?"

This was more than Hildebrand could bear, mighty as was his power of self-subjection.

"Tear out his blasphemous tongue!" shouted the Pontiff. "Tear it out! his future silence shall give consent to the rightful claims of God's Anointed."

But there were none of his human, or inhuman, butchers present, and the peers of Tuscany, even his ecclesiastics, turned aside from his gentle, Christ-like order. As to the Countess Matilda and her suite, they, one and all, left the chamber, sick at heart.

The calm, dignified, passiveness of Ranulph had, heretofore, as we have said, inflamed the meek Hildebrand; but this dissentient disgust at his behaviour inflamed him far still more.

"Thy tongue, Ranulph, shall profane no more, until our God and Master makes it vocal when thou goest unto thine own place. Nay, further, thine eyes shall no longer look upon the beauties of that work which was made by the Creator whom thou profanest in me his representative. Malatesta!" he spake loudly to the officer of his body-guard, "Dost thou hear my orders?"

"I hear, your Holiness!" replied the captain.

"Hildebrand, false tyrant Hildebrand,—wolf in the flock of God, ungrateful, selfish, despotic, insatiate, ambitious priest—the last voice of this poor tongue shall, at least, close its office upon thee. These poor eyes, which thou, the Vicar of Christ—who came to open eyes, not shut them—hast doomed for ever, look upon thee. Thank my Almighty Father! they will see so flagrant a foe against humanity no longer. Thou shalt be brought to misery. The voices of all ages shall curse thee. Kings and potentates, and their subjects too, may suffer from thine assumptions of irresponsible authority. Centuries of woe and powerlessness, as to good, may pass, but the deep words of man's heart shall curse thee for this thy precedent. And the time shall

come when thou and thy chair shall be consumed at the brightness of His advent, whose laws thou, his professed Vicar, dost contravene, and whose mission of mercy thou dost betray!"

The Pope, even, was paralysed into silence by this fearful denunciation. And it was a fact as singular as it was true, that not one of his bishops or abbots, priests or deacons, acolytes or soldiers, gave out one note of indignation at this, apparently, audacious protest.

"Let the blasphemer be removed!" commanded Hildebrand,—annoyed, wounded in his pride as he was, on finding how isolated he stood. Bitter hours, however, did he prescribe for his faint-hearted servitors, for this their cowardice.

"Let the blasphemer be removed and await our judgment!" again exclaimed the Pontiff, enraged, and beyond all measure, at the obvious reluctance of his soldiers to touch the person of the noble prisoner. "Remove him!—his miserable paramour, Elgitha, has taught him all these blaspheming arguments."

Ranulph had, up to this moment, retained an almost perfect self-possession. Forcible as had been his prophecies against the Pontiff, they had

been words of inspiration, not of individual passion. But when his own Elgitha was thus publicly traduced, and by a voice so incontestable in the ears of Europe, the blood of the man arose. The rush of its current through his veins was appalling to behold. The pale, wan priest of God, worn by his travels, his fastings, his anxieties for his Sovereign—the pale, wan priest of God, suddenly glowed, as from a furnace. He stood more erect than ever. His mild, loving eye seemed to burn. His voice, that had, hitherto, been gentle and low, now burst forth in sounds so loud, so commanding, so fearless, that Hildebrand shook, nay his chair shook, so did the table upon which he leant.

“Thou hast doomed my tongue, hast thou?” exclaimed Ranulph. “And mine eyes are to be put out, at thy spiritual command! This is nought for me, false, usurping Hildebrand. Hast thou, dost thou, dare to sully the fair fame of her? Dost thou, Pontiff as thou wouldst call thyself, dost thou *dare* to impugn my wife? Pope Gregory, St. Peter, whose chair thou hast, by a mob-election, most iniquitously usurped, St. Peter, so say our holy Scriptures, was himself a married man.” And then, turning to his fellow-

nobles that were near him, and who had been breathlessly listening to his bold and fearless words, he said, and in the words of the profoundest courtesy, but most bitterly, "My brother peers, are the tenures of your Lordships dependent on the will of this man's arrogance?"

"Did we not say, remove him, ye false indolent knaves?" cried Hildebrand. "Pause for one moment more, and ye shall be accursed."

"I will save them even an hour's sorrow from thy curse, Pope Gregory," returned Ranulph, with a re-collected calmness. But, as he retired, with his agitated gaolers, and looking back upon the Pope, he said, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

CHAPTER XII.

"A patience to endure a tyrant's stroke ;
A courage to encounter all things dire ;
A perseverance, which could never tire ;
A purity, which hell-powers could not beguile :
Humility, which all debasements prized,
Exulting for God's sake to be despised."

BISHOP KEN.

HOURS on hours—nay, days on days—passed over the head and heart of this poor suffering protester, Ranulph,—confined within a cell, limited to the most meagre fare, and in expectation, every moment, of being summoned to an audience with the Pontiff that should decide upon his fate.

The brutal cruelty of Hildebrand was not carried into execution. From policy it might be—certainly it was not from tenderness—but, whether or no, Ranulph was allowed to retain both his tongue and his sight. Still, as he paced his cold, dank, dungeon, it were inevitable

but that he should scrutinize those recent circumstances that had led to his capture.

“Am I not,” he said to himself, while stalking up and down his prison, “am I not one of Henry’s suite? Am I not one of his chosen servants—responsible to him, and, under God, to him alone: and shall a churchman, of the highest loftiness though he be, dare to infringe thus on my commission? Would to God that the Holy Father recollected the command, ‘Render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar’s!’”

Hours on hours, days on days, he paced his cell. Yet no one streak of the morning’s light found him but upon his knees. So was it with the grey of eventide, as it darkened.

“Blessed, most blessed Book!” said the poor prisoner, when, on some morning, fairer than usual, one ray of light helped him to read in a manuscript Bible which he had kept about his person, carefully enfolded in his robes.

He had just read thencefrom,—“Such an High Priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the

people's; for this he did once, when he offered up himself."

"What!" said he,—“does this Book of God affirm that there is to be no daily sacrifice? And I, as God's priest, have been offering a daily one! Does it tell me that the Sacrificer must be holy, and harmless, and separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens? Oh! Christ forgive me! This truth, right reasonable as it is, I never thought of! I! I! I have offered holy mass! I have called God's children to bow down and to believe in the holy sacrifice. But where hath been my own holiness, or my harmlessness, or my separateness from sinners, or my place above the heavens?”

As Ranulph roamed about his dungeon, reflections, such as these, wore out his manly spirit. His imprisonment became still more fearful, for—by the Pope's directions that the encaged victim should be despatched by every act the least questionable—bread the most decayed and water the most fetid were placed upon the stone beside him.

Yet, in the hall above, Gregory felt at ease. With self-indulgence we charge him not. With foul voluptuousness, in the company of the

Countess Matilda, we charge him not, although his accusers have been many ; but he *did* walk in ease and gaiety, he *did* feast, he *did* laugh, while under his very feet there groaned the noble Ranulph.

Let our readers imagine to themselves their Lord and dying Saviour,—of whom this cruel Pontiff professed to be the Vicar,—let them imagine Him—if they can do so without the most wanton blasphemy against his gentle, infinite love—trampling upon some poor dissentient from His Messiahship !

Shouts, peals of laughter, such as he had been accustomed to witness in olden time, broke upon Ranulph's ear, from the hall above him.

What a contrast did his poor dungeon present to that which his mind figured of those gay, and warm, and luxurious rooms from which those sounds issued ! A pale flickering lamp aided his sight that had become accustomed to darkness, and he could see crawling amid the green slime of his apartment many a revolting yet harmless reptile. As he was in the act of scanning the movements of a poor toad, and was beginning to feel towards it a kindness, from which in his brighter and more thoughtless days he would

have shrunk, the Pope's chaplain arrived, self-introduced.

"My Lord Ranulph," began he, with insinuating courtesy, "would that his Holiness had spared me the pain of this awful sight and this interview, at which my blood grows cold! Oh! would that he had spared me,—save that, perchance, it may lead to the deliverance of my noble brother churchman!"

"Then thou bringest me some paternal message from Hildebrand?" answered Ranulph. In speaking thus, he strove to conceal all eagerness, and, in the meantime, so to designate the Pope, whom he believed to be an usurper of the Holy Chair, as should involve no recognition of his claims upon the papacy.

"Not so, your lordship," replied the priest; and most conveniently for the role on which he had determined, he let fall a tear. "Not so, your lordship," he resumed; "the Holy Father has commanded me to see thee, and the last words from his divine lips were these: 'let him know that he that converteth a sinner from the error of his ways, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins.' May the Mother of God grant me this high honour!"

"Brother!" said Ranulph, and with firm yet mild dignity, and with a look which, despite the charity of his poor stricken heart, had incredulity and suspicion within its glance, "Brother, may I recal to thee the assumption upon which St. James rests that promise? It is this: 'If one do err from the faith, and one convert him.' I am unconscious of error in my morals or in my doctrine."

"Forgive me, my Lord Ranulph," returned the chaplain. "I dare advance no charge or charges against thee, who art my superior."

"Then let me hearken—and I will do right humbly—to thy words," said Ranulph.

"But lend me that genial trustfulness, for which thou hast been so deservedly renowned in our Mother Church, and I will hopefully give them utterance," replied the priest.

"Utter them, my brother, and I will pray God's Holy Spirit to quicken my understanding, that so I may rightfully appreciate, and my will, that so I may honestly obey them," was the answer.

"Canst thou deny, my lord," asked the chaplain, "that thou hast questioned, and in full court, the tenure by which his Holiness holds

his supreme pontificate? that thou hast seen fit, and in the ears of the Tuscan nobles and in those of thy brother ecclesiastics, to impugn the temporal authority of St. Peter and his successors? that thou, in thine own person and by thy official power, hast withstood the voice of Mother Church in thine own and in the domestic relations of thy clergy? But retract thy words, and so am I commanded to assure thee by his Holiness, thou shalt have instant absolution; thou shalt have an apostolic investiture of thine own office; thou shalt have still higher ones."

The Count remained so long silent, and was, evidently, so thoughtful, that the astute priest was beginning to exult in the success of his overtures and the address with which he had made them. Ranulph had closed his eyes, in order to concentrate his power of thinking; and it was curious to observe the chaplain, as he eagerly, and apparently with a power of translating the voice of the human countenance, watched him.

The Chaplain was a man of some sixty years of age. He had been distinguished for talents which, respectable howsoever, were more in keeping with those habits of adroitness, of manage-

ment, of dogged self-will, of love of power, that so much more appropriately belong to some conventional secretariate than to a Christian ministry—to which straight-forwardness, and courtesy, and humility, ought ever to appertain. There he sat, upon a rude stone bench, speculating upon the inner processes of feeling and of thought that were now so fearfully going on beneath the honest but musing face of Ranulph. This Chaplain, with iron-grey locks, with a restless eye, with sharp features, that were expressive from their very boniness, each and all of which were in striking contrast to the golden hair, the closed eyelids, the genial lineaments of the noble prisoner; this Chaplain, who had, in past days, triumphed over the unsuspecting nature of the Count, albeit that Count had powers of intellect that, if his kindly nature had allowed him to employ them in retort or in command, would have instantly crushed his subtle adversary; this Chaplain, we say, now sat with a look of shrewd but well-restrained malignity upon the deliberative Ranulph.

At length Ranulph broke the silence; and it was obvious that the effort with which he did so was a convulsive one.

"My royal master," he said, "has already recognised the tenure of his Holiness; and I mourn, that, in a moment of insult and impatience, I sinned so wickedly as to question it: and I implore the pardon of the Holy Father, of the Saints, of our Lady, and of her Son." As he uttered this, he sighed.

"Then I have saved a soul from death! I have hidden a multitude of sins!" exclaimed the Chaplain. Nevertheless, the triumph upon his brow was aught but that of an unself-seeking pastor after a lost soul. Ranulph, whose eyes casually opened at this exclamation, saw the whole, and it re-braced his unnerved faculties.

"Yet wait awhile, I pray thee, brother!" he continued. "I retract. I, the liege subject of Henry the Fourth, the Emperor of Germany and the King of Rome, retract. I retract humbly, earnestly; and may the Holy Father find it right and wise to assign me penance, and to pardon me! But . . ."

"That he will do, and without preliminaries!" interrupted the Priest. "I have his own authority to proffer and to pledge it."

"My brother!" answered Ranulph, with a pale smile, "thus far I can go, but no farther."

“What need of going farther, my Lord Ranulph?” he inquired. “Thou wilt proclaim in thine own diocese the rightful Popedom of his Holiness?”

“Yes, verily!” returned Ranulph; “and with a whole and honest heart, and as one of his truest sons; and yet, first and chiefly, I cannot forego the words of St. Peter: ‘Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord’s sake: whether it be to the king, *as supreme*; or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evil doers, and for the praise of them that do well.’ My royal master,” continued he, and with glowing emphasis, “*is supreme in his own domain!*”

“Most assuredly *in his own domain!*” retorted the Chaplain, and with all his powers of cunningness enlisted in the answer. “But is the investiture of the priests of the Most High God the appropriate domain of laymen, however exalted they may be?”

“Nay, verily!” calmly answered Ranulph, “if his Holiness will forego the civil power which he and his predecessors have so earnestly assumed as accompanying these investitures. Has the monarch of a realm no supremacy over his own

civil functionaries ? Let the priests, the abbots, the bishops of our Church, be authorized by his Holiness to repudiate all powers, all wealth, all dignities of civil life ; let him, if his wisdom welcome it, denude us of all these ; but over them, so long as they continue, St. Peter—I affirm—declares the sovereign to be *supreme*."

"Then," tartly replied the Priest, "the king can consecrate?"

"Nay, not so!" rejoined Ranulph; "he but reserves his veto, and upon his supreme civil prerogative as to civil privileges."

"Whatsoever thou shalt bind *on earth* shall be bound in heaven," murmured the Chaplain.

"And with what keys? I ask you, brother," returned the Bishop. "Keys of *heaven*, were they not? Keys of pure, spiritual authority, were they not? Whereas now, what keys employs the Holy Father? What but those of the civil arm? What but those, the works of which are state intrigues, and men of blood?"

"Wilt thou recant?" cried the chaplain, stung with mortification at a constancy which he had concluded to be failing.

"'Let God be true and every man a liar,' is my

lowly motto," briefly returned Ranulph. "I have said enough!"

"Enough indeed—enough to shew God's Vicar that to save thy soul from damnation after purgatory, we must *make* thee penitent!" concluded the Chaplain, and he withdrew.

CHAPTER XIII.

"But as we under heaven are supreme head,
So, under him, that great supremacy,
Where we do reign, we will alone uphold,
Without the assistance of a mortal hand ;
So tell the Pope ; all reverence set apart,
To him, and his usurped authority."

KING JOHN.

WE must now beg our readers to turn back to Elgitha and her children, immediately after their agonizing separation from Ranulph, the father and the husband.

It will be recollected that, by agreement between the Empress Bertha and the Priest-Count, the almost widow and orphans (most merciful work of Christ's Vicar !) were to seek asylum in the Court of Matilda, the wife of our William the Conqueror.

The Queen Matilda's relationship to the Emperor Henry would, alone, have given Elgitha promise of protection ; but, moreover, it had become full well known that the great King of

England maintained a solitary but a proud defiance of the ambitious and cruel encroachments of Pope Gregory. In fact, at a national synod which the Norman Conqueror had allowed the legate to summon at Winchester, at the express request of Gregory, it had been decreed that, although no bishop should thenceforth ordain any priest or deacon who had not previously taken the oath of celibacy, yet that no ecclesiastics, already married, should be separated from their wives. To these the only reservation that was made referred to those who belonged to collegiate or cathedral churches.

Thus, both from the claims of affinity which the Emperor had upon King William's wife, as also from the right-minded humanity of King William's clergy, England afforded to the poor, distracted Elgitha a refuge for herself and for her babes. That the Monarch not merely lent his sanction, but added his authority to this decision of the ecclesiastics of his realm, was another, and most firm, ground of confidence that her refuge would be sacred.

A melancholy thought it must ever be to the benevolent historian, that the Court of William, one of the greatest but most ruthless soldiers

that ever lived, was sought to by a woman with her little ones, in flight from the shepherd of Christ's fold !

The Lord Ranulph had confided his wife and children to the guardianship of Egelbert, his oldest and most faithful squire ; and he had given him commands to see them safe at whatever place the Queen Matilda might be remaining, and then to return back to himself.

Henry and Bertha furnished Elgitha with strong letters to Matilda, entreating her all-powerful influence with the Conqueror, on behalf of the poor fugitives.

Matilda's heart was wounded at the account which Elgitha gave of the desolate condition of her kinsman—the Royal Solitary in Spires. And her sorrow was still the deeper when she extorted from the hesitating refugee the facts of social misery that had followed upon the monstrous anathemas of the Pontiff.

It was on the third day after Elgitha's arrival at the English Court, and just upon her having answered some of these cross-questionings of the Queen, which drove her to state the woes of both her own house and that of others, that King William entered the chamber of his

Consort. He would have arrived there unperceived, had not the unerring sympathies of Matilda's heart detected his approach. Motioning by a finger upon his lip, he obtained the Queen's silence, and stood an unknown listener to Elgitha's recital of her sorrows.

She had scarcely finished her sad, simple tale, ere the Monarch, rough and rugged as he was, burst into a voice of indignation.

"Dost thou say, lady fair," he exclaimed with a vehemence more befitting a council-chamber than a woman's room, "Dost thou say that the Holy Father hath proscribed thy noble husband and thyself? That he doth dare to demand penance from our Royal Brother Henry, because he will not call St. Peter his earthly Suzerain?"

"Doth this Priest," continued he, as he walked the room in a fury uncontrollable, "Doth he mean to become *my* king too?"

"Oh! pardon me, your Highness," said Elgitha, and with a voice of the gravest sorrow, "I knew not of the presence of your Highness, or my words might have been more measured."

"Then, fair lady, thou hast learned the tricks of Rome! Hast *thou* too been taught disguise?"

"Again may I pray your Highness to forgive me," Elgitha answered, proudly. "I have learned that truth and openness are both right and safe. I have not—I have never been—guilty of dissemblance."

The Conqueror was struck—nay silenced—by the natural dignity of the speaker.

He was a soldier in all that promptitude and summariness of thought, which we are wont to look at as the essential attributes of that character. But he had other and more individual peculiarities. Fierce and stubborn (so all history proclaims), wise and politic, and generous (if the conditions of his crown, as an usurper, ever gave him the opportunity of being generous), the Norman Conqueror was a harsh man to woman-kind. Yet there were moments when the laws of true chivalry asserted their prerogative. And he bent, albeit somewhat constrainedly, before Elgitha, as she spoke.

His was, indeed, an iron visage; and his look was, indeed, royally self-possessed. Nevertheless, Elgitha watched his countenance without fear,—and she quailed not as she caught his eye. Still, her heart beat with anxiety—but the monarch speedily relieved her.

“ Ah ! ah ! ” he said, grinding his teeth. “ So the Holy Father would make God’s Princes to become his tributaries ! So I am to slave, and toil, and fight, and, if needs be, die, as a vassal to this Priest of Rome ! He, forsooth, is to have all, all that my good sword may win for me ! Oh ! yes, he is to parcel my broad lands among his bishops, just as he chooses ! He is to give my abbeys to his friends and creatures, or keep them to himself ! And I am not to say, in my own dominions, whether a man shall have a wife or no ! God wotteth, we shall be slow to learn this lesson.”

“ Lady Elgitha,” said the Conqueror—stopping short suddenly, and with ill-suppressed fury—“ the Queen, I engage it, will protect thee and thine ; thy refuge shall be safe and for ever, if thou continuest to be our guest. And let”—he added bitterly—“ let thy persecutor look to it.”

CHAPTER XIV.

" 'Tis not the loss of love's assurance,
It is not doubting what thou art,
But 'tis the too, too long endurance
Of absence, that afflicts my heart."

CAMPBELL.

NEARLY two years had elapsed since the circumstances recorded in the previous chapter.

Not to speak of the events that had, in the meantime, occurred both in Germany and Italy, it will be enough, for our purpose, to state, that Elgitha had for months accompanied the Court ; but, at last, worn with anxiety for her husband, the Lord Ranulph, she obtained leave from Queen Matilda, her protectress, to retire to a spot of great seclusion. It was on the coast of Sussex ; and there she waited, looking wistfully at every sail as it approached the shore. Long and painfully corroding to the heart though this effort was, yet day on day, she persisted ; and no shallop, however small, drove upon the beach, without

Elgitha being there, beforehand, in hope and to question the surrounding sailors.

It was on one exquisite morning in the month of June, that she might have been seen seated in the garden before her humble cottage—now watching, with a mother's smiles, the sportive gambols of her two lovely boys,—anon casting her tearful eyes upon the ground, and sighing heavily. The very brilliance of the day, the carols of the feathered songsters, the fresh, happy looks of the flowers at her feet, only served to weigh down her spirits. Hope had long been deferred, and her heart was beginning to be sick.

She moaned to herself,—“Ranulph, dearest Ranulph! surely something hath befallen thee, or” But a messenger interrupted the conclusion of the sentence.

“May I ask,” he said, bowing with a lowly reverence, “if I am in the presence of the Lady Elgitha?”

He held, extended in his hand, a letter, and her quick eye caught the well-known superscription of her husband.

“Oh! give it, give it me!” she cried, starting from her seat. It is for me.” And her hands so trembled, and such was her impatience, that the

paper was torn in her efforts to uncloset it. Her limbs, become more fragile than ever, from deep, long grief, tottered, and the messenger led her back to the bench which she had quitted in her eagerness.

There she sat, and read and re-read, and read again, the lines that follow. And, what made the scene still more touching, her little ones left their sports, and while clinging to her knees, looked with mysterious wonder, blended with alarm, at the quick and strange succession of hopes and fears, as they alternately smiled and grew pale upon their mother's face.

She read thus :—

“ My beloved Elgitha, thy Ranulph is in Normandy, and he will soon be with thee.” . . .

Her elder boy's joyous eye reflected back her fervent beam of happiness.

“ I hoped to have found thee here, as since that faithful Egelbert, to whom we owe so much, brought me word of thy gracious reception by the Queen of England, my poor heart hath been left in silence.”

Elgitha shuddered, and both her boys looked concern and clung closer to her

“ Elgitha ! my own Elgitha ! prepare thyself

to find me strangely, sadly altered. Altered? nay, not in my love of thee, sweet one,—nor, in my love of God—save, so would I fain believe, that both have increased. But pray, Elgitha, for the powers of self-discipline and submissiveness to the will of Christ, for thy Ranulph hath suffered much. But, blessed Lord! though we may not have long to live together, let me die upon her bosom!”

Then came the terrible paroxysm of the wife and of the mother. Almost unconsciously she clasped both her children in her arms, and sobbed, and sobbed again. The elder boy frowned, grew red, clenched his little hand, looked around for the cruel man that had made his mother weep; his almost infant brother burst into an uncontrollable scream of anguish.

“What can mean my Ranulph?” her foreboding fears said to her. “Has Pope Gregory dared to torture his noble body?”

“Ah!” continued she to herself, “the Pontiff did approve of the horrors that the cruel Abbot Transmundus inflicted. Oh! hath God allowed him to inflict the same upon dear, dear, dearest Ranulph?”

She looked round wistfully for the messenger ; but he had left unperceived. So blind had been the tumult of her sorrow.

We must pass over the few days that intervened between the arrival of this letter and that of Ranulph.

Immediately upon regaining her self-possession, after having read his letter, she commissioned numerous scouts to move, day and night, along the shore, enjoining them to let her know, on the moment, when either of them might descry a sail from Normandy. To each she had allotted a led horse, carefully providing for the chances of her husband's landing at some distance.

It happened that he did so, and there was no time to give her notice. The vessel that bore him gained a small creek, some miles away from her lowly cottage. He disembarked, supported by the faithful Egelbert ; and he, who had been wont with an elastic and vigorous bound to vault upon his steed, though so mettlesome, could, only with the most painful effort, mount the poor, quiet drudge, that love, under necessity, had sent him. Slowly—for his great weakness rendered any movement that could be called

quick, impossible,—he followed his guide towards the cottage.

How grateful, yet how terribly anxious, was the moment when Elgitha found herself again in the arms of her beloved lord ! She kissed him with a fond wife's earnestness and fervency ; she clasped him again and again ; then she rushed away to bring his little ones, and with a mother's pride forestalled the joy and the praise of the father ; and then, with a woman's rapidity of emotion, she sobbed aloud, as she looked upon the pale, attenuated frame of her once fresh and vigorous husband.

His feelings had been too much for him, and aided by the grave, saddened Egelbert, she caught him, as he staggered, and supported him to a couch.

Then alas ! her gaze revealed the terrible ravages of grief ; they might be those, she feared, of worse. Shudderingly, she thought she could detect the characters of death, and the ominous words of Raulph's letter became instinct with meaning.

Have any of our readers—be they husband or wife, or parent, or brother, or sister, or friend,—

ever welcomed back, after a long and anxious separation, one who had left them in the glow of youth, but who returned bowed down with sickness? While the full heart hath been thanking God for the re-union, have they suddenly become aware that a mortal illness hath stricken the object of their love? Have they known the cold thought that he had come back only to give them occasion to tend his dying hours; to slake his thirst; to wipe the death-dews from his brow? In man's storm-driven path, there are few innocent pangs equal, save those from knowing that the loved one had perished, without care or solace, upon a foreign shore.

What must *they* have been that were now riving Elgitha's heart?

"Sobs! sobs! mine own!" said Ranulph, faintly, "and that too on the morning when our God hath brought us again together!"

"Ah! he has murdered thee, I see!" she exclaimed frantically. "He—he—the so-called Vicar of Christ,—of Him who is the Father of the fatherless, and the husband of the widow—he has murdered thee. I had forgiven him, had he let me perish with thee."

"Wound me not thus, mine own Elgitha. Hath not Heaven restored us to each other?"

"Did the Pope restore thee, Ranulph dearest?" she cried indignantly. "May his own anathemas return back upon his cold, icy, cruel heart!"

She blushed at her own vehemence.

"Nay, nay, Elgitha: say rather 'it is the Lord, let Him do what seemeth Him good.' Wish no ill to the Pontiff. If suffer he must, wish not thyself to punish him. Is it not enough for us to know that 'Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord?' Need we doubt its certainty or its justice? Need we anticipate its time? Nay more, ought we to watch for, hope for its development?"

"Ranulph—my Ranulph! what have they done to thee?" she cried most piteously, and unable to listen to and receive the words of the forgiving sufferer. "Thou canst recollect," she continued, "when to our own castle thou didst return in horror at the approval which Pope Gregory had given of the tortures inflicted by the Abbot Transmundus.* Oh! Ranulph! hath the Pope tortured thee?"

* See Note F.

“Nay, nay, my love!” he answered, “so save thy heart that terror. But I am faint. Give me some cordial, and some sleep, and thou shalt know all. Or rather, dearest! Egelbert can give to thee my papers; for strength hath failed me.

CHAPTER XV.

"Is there a power that can sustain and cheer
The captive chieftain, by a tyrant's doom
Forced to descend alive into his tomb,
A dungeon dark! where he must waste the year,
And lie cut off from all his heart holds dear?"

WORDSWORTH.

THE exhausted traveller had fallen into a placid sleep, when the alarmed wife—eager to know the worst—softly withdrew from beside his couch, and sought after the faithful Egelbert, in order to obtain the papers.

She found him seated in a solitary nook, manfully struggling to conceal his sadness, and disporting with her boys.

"Egelbert!" said Elgitha, with a tone and look of grateful confidence, "my lord directs me to read some papers that he hath entrusted to thy guardianship."

"Ah! read them not, dear lady!" he replied; "they can only sadden. And yet, and yet," he

murmured, "they will make her reverence and love him all the more."

"If my lord commands," said Egelbert, still hesitating. . . .

"Then he does desire, Egelbert!" returned Elgitha; and she instantly obtained the packet and retired.

The mere appearance of these papers wrung her heart. Unlike those of his earlier and happier life, they were soiled, were covered with characters and with an ink that betokened haste and tremor; were crumpled, showing that they had often been suddenly secreted.

We will give extracts:—

"Canoss. Car. Feb. 1077.

"Ne avertas faciem tuam a me; ne declines in irâ a servo tuo. Adjutor meus esto; ne derelinquas me, neque despicias me Deus salutaris meus."*

"An audience with the Pope. He—stern, imperious, demanded first, my abjuration of

* Psalm xxvii. 9. "Hide not thy face far from me; put not thy servant away in anger: be thou my helper; leave me not neither condemn me, O God of my salvation."

“ the Emperor, and my entire—temporal and
“ spiritual—submission to the Holy See, body
“ and soul : secondly, my oath never to see again
“ my Elgitha or our babes : at last, furious at
“ my obstinacy, as he called it, he has sent me to
“ a darker, lower dungeon.

“ O ! Christ, thou King of kings ! tell thy frail
“ child, didst Thou send Thy minister to trample
“ on the necks of kings, to bind their princes in
“ chains and their nobles with links of iron ?

“ Ave Maria ! Gentle Mother ! doth thy Son
“ scorn the pure heart-loves of those whom he
“ died to redeem ?”

“ Apr. 10.

“ No sounds around me ! Yes, some—the
“ croakings of yon poor frog. The gaoler even
“ will not speak. O ! for one word of a human
“ voice. ‘Infixus sum in limo profundi : et non
“ est substantia.’ ”*

“ Apr. 12.

“ To-day Gregory’s chaplain ! Shrewd, quick
“ in his retorts upon this poor, weakened brain.

* Psalm lxxix. 2. “ I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing.”

“Light, light! O! for one gleam of God’s
“blessed sun! Yet stay, impatient heart. ‘Sig-
“natum est super nos lumen vultus tui Do-
“mine.’”*

“What month is it? What day? Or is it
“night? Have I been here one hour, or ten
“years? Ah! were I but blind, as the Pontiff
“threatened he would make me . . . yet stay
“again, rebellious heart. Could I then see and
“read this blessed Bible? thou dear solace of
“this human grave! my resurrection-hope!
“Bless, bless Thee, Almighty Father, that I can
“still see to read thy commands upon me to
“‘forgive mine enemies;’ that I still can see
“that there is but one Mediator between God
“and man—the man Christ Jesus; that I still
“can see that there remaineth no more sacrifice
“for sin; that I still can see that when I walk
“through the waters thou wilt be with me, and
“through the floods, they shall not overflow . . .
The page was blotted—rolled up in haste.

* Psalm iv. 6. “Lord, lift thou up the light of thy
countenance upon us.”

“Elgitha! Elgitha! where art thou, love?
“Where is Albert? where is Henry?

“And am I to die here—rot away here?
“Doth my royal master think of Ranulph? or
“have my foes spread false rumours of my
“death?

“O! how wrong is this repining—this queru-
“lousness! Did I not read to-day, ‘In the
“world ye shall have tribulation. Shall not the
“servant be as his master, and the disciple as
“his lord? If they have persecuted me, they
“will persecute you also?’ Blessed book! thou
“dost make this cell a palace!”

“My poor heart flutters. But just now, three
“stones struck upon the bars. But my chains—
“alas! my knees—even were they free—confine
“me. Not my will, O Lord, but thine be done!
“Save—save—O! save my wife! my children!
“and do Thou what seemeth to Thee good.”

These are but extracts casually selected. We have but to state, in further explanation, that the prisoner had been several times summoned before the Pope; that the richest overtures of Church preferment were tendered to him, if he would but

forswear his sovereign and his wife ; that after every interview with the Pontiff his durance was made more vile and his food became more coarse and stinted ; that at length, when Hildebrand had to abandon Canossa, he was left unthought of, uncared for, save by his grateful sovereigns who were sorrowing over his reported death ; save by his Elgitha and the sympathizing Qneen of England ; save by—last though not least—his untiring, faithful follower, Egelbert.

As we have read in the last memorandum of Ranulph's dungeon diary, three stones had been aimed against the prison bars. They were thrown by Egelbert—chiefly with the hope of quickening to a life of feeling the heart which the poor esquire feared two years of such horrid confinement must have deadened.

The next day, strengthened with the Emperor's gold, he gained the gaoler. And . . . and . . .

But we have learned of the escape already.

CHAPTER XVI.

“Transcendant boon!
. . . . bestowed to equalise and bless
Under the weight of mortal wretchedness.”

WORDSWORTH.

THERE was many another record in this sad diary. There was many another fervent prayer of which Elgitha saw herself to have been the burden. And tears stole off as she lingered over them. But we cannot—would not—withdraw the veil of love that covered them.

“Art thou strong enough to read to me, my Ranulph?” she said, a few days after, when—somewhat recruited by rest and happiness—he sat in the open air, beside her. For several minutes he had been inhaling deep draughts of the sea-breeze, and Elgitha’s heart fluttered with anxious joy as a slight pink tinge crept over the almost livid countenance of the sufferer.

She had asked the question, “Art thou strong enough to read to me?” because, on the day

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before, he had begun to do so, and was so evidently wounded at her thoughtful entreaties to him to desist, that she had balanced in her mind the injuries of encouraging or preventing him, and pronounced in favour of the former.

“ I long to read to thee, Elgitha !” he returned, and with a voice whose new firmness reminded her of earlier days. “ Shall these wings of God’s gentle air be so kindly fanning me, and dare I be silent, and not hymn his praise ?”

“ Read — read—dearest !” she replied, as her gaze upon his features became one of admiration as well as love. “ What book hast thou there, my husband ?” she continued, while with an innocent guile she strove gradually to call him forth.

“ What have I, sweet one ?” answered Ranulph. “ Nought but the Book of God !” and he took it to his heart with a fond emotion,—“ that Book, of which, before our sorrow, I had known so little ; that dear—precious—Book, Elgitha, without which my dungeon had been my grave, or—what is worse—the scene of my irresoluteness for thyself, for my sovereign, for my God.”

“ Irresoluteness ?” inquired his wife, with more

than ordinary surprise. "Of that, man never hath accused thee!"

"Alas!" replied the husband, "whence could I have obtained a firmness—bereft as I was of all Church-communion, excommunicated from Christ's fold, an alien from the sympathies of the Saints of heaven, without the aid of even a brother priest, without confession, without one mass—ah! whence could I have obtained a firmness, had not *this* Book told me 'to that man will I look, and with him will I dwell, that is of a humble and a contrite spirit and that trembleth at my word?' Did it not teach me to cry from my spiritual desert, 'I am cast out of thy sight, yet will I look again towards thy Holy Temple?'"

He had to pause; so weak was he. Elgitha could only revive him with some cordial,—not daring to obtrude one syllable.

"And then, and then," continued he, "the saints, aye, even the Virgin Mother, seemed to stand aloof: but read thou here"—and he opened at a page which had been so habitually before him that the book instantly disclosed it—"Wherefore He is able to save unto the uttermost *all* that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to

make intercession for them.' What intercessors did I need more?"

"Speak not, dearest!" added Ranulph, as his wife was about to answer; "let me finish. Horror on horror would often seize me when the thought assailed my weakness that Christ's Vicar had poured his curse upon me. I had fainted, if this Book had never said to me, 'Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.'"

"Pope Hildebrand to the life!" exclaimed Elgitha. "Hath he not, dear Ranulph, disannulled every power but his own? Calls he not himself the source of universal law? Above what authorities hath he not dared to exalt himself? Were he the Great Omnipotent, could his words have been more commanding, or his edicts more irresponsible in pretension? Pope Hildebrand to the life!"

"Pope Hildebrand to the life?" mildly asked a venerable looking man, who had, unseen, ap-

proached them, and had caught the words. "Pray give me his portrait," he continued. "I would have it, were it but a glimpse of the far-famed Pontiff."

The speaker was venerable from his snow-white locks; although, judging merely from the fresh colour upon his face and the erectness of his gait, his age could not have passed that of mature manhood. He wore the dress of an ecclesiastic, and the gold chain upon his neck proclaimed him to be a dignitary.

Elgitha grew deadly pale, at terror lest other words had been overheard.

Ranulph too felt alarm, but it only made his chivalrous blood mount to his ashy temples,—and, throwing an arm around her, he drew her to his protecting bosom.

"Fear not, daughter," said the Abbot (for he was one), "I bear thee and thine no unfriendly purpose! I have heard nought, and, if I had, the Abbot Osgood is no worshipper of Pope Gregory. Wilt thou tremble at my credentials, lady?" added he, placing in her hands a letter.

While she employed herself in reading it, Ranulph—but with the utmost pain—rose in courtesy to the stranger.

“Move not, my lord!” quickly interposed the Abbot. “The air of merry England shall soon make thee fitter to enact such kindness.”

The Priest-Count gravely shook his head.

The following was the letter:—

“Queen Matilda to the Lady Elgitha, greeting :
Herewith we send thee our trusty messenger,—
Father Osgood. He will, by word of mouth,
acquaint thee with our *immediate* wishes. Defer
not one moment.

“Thy sure Friend,

“MATILDA.”

“Father, what can be the meaning of her Highness?” asked Elgitha, eagerly. The anxious look of Ranulph told her the imprudence of her suddenness in question. But it was too late.

The noble husband, as quickly, saw his wife’s self-reproach, and hastened to relieve her. It was by a mute movement of his finger to a passage in *the Book*: “He shall not be afraid of evil tidings; his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord.”

A glance told the pious Saxon Abbot what

was the nature of the volume,—and his eye beamed with pleasure.

“Deign to share with me, my lord, thy precious morsel! Sweeter will it be to me than honey or the honey-comb.”

“My brother!” said the noble sufferer, tenderly,—and his eyes lost all their languor as they looked with affectionate inquiringness upon the Abbot,—“Then thou, too, dost know that the heart tried and trusting in the Lord need fear no evil tidings?”

“Yea, verily, my lord!” the Abbot answered; “and so, thou wilt not be alarmed at my adding that ‘faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.’”

“Then let the righteous smite me, my lord Abbot; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head,” responded Ranulph.

And then the anxious pair heard the following: That King William was being beset by a Papal Legate, whom the vindictive Hildebrand had ordered to demand the person of the escaped prisoner: That, though chafed at the interference of the Pontiff, the Conqueror—surprised at the Lord Ranulph’s silence and absence—had often

shewn an unconciliatory feeling about him : That there was danger, the most imminent, lest King William, in an hour of irritation—and as a sop to the Cerberus of Rome—might surrender the fugitive : That nothing but the entreaty of the Queen, sustained as it was by the policy of Lanfranc, the Archbishop of Canterbury, had prevented the fatal word : That her Highness had no further hope but in the immediate presence of Elgitha and her husband,—whence she augured a good influence upon the feelings of the Conqueror.

Such were the chief points on which the Abbot most earnestly insisted.

“Look at him, Reverend Father !” exclaimed Elgitha. “Look at my noble lord, and answer me : Could he—with the small power that Pope Gregory hath left him—have visited the Court ?”

“Alas ! no, daughter ! but, and I must be faithful, could’st *thou* not have written to her Highness to tell her so ?”

“Oh ! selfish, short-sighted love,” she moaned, “I have been too happy and too miserable, and I have thought only for myself.”

“My lord Abbot !” interrupted Ranulph, “it hath been all my fault, and my fault alone. Two

years of utter darkness have unfitted me for the light. Sure I am that I may trust thee. Full sure am I that thou wilt precede me, and plead on my behalf. I will follow, and that to-day. My night cometh, and then I can work no longer. Do thou, my loved one," he continued, turning to his wife, "aid me for the journey."

"Her Highness hath forestalled all, my lord!" returned the Abbot. "The softest litters are awaiting both of you. The King, at Michaelmas, will be, with his full court, at Winchester. But reach our humble monastery, before he comes, and our brotherhood will refresh thee. And the Abbess of the adjoining Convent commands me to crave the Lady Elgitha to do honour to her house. But bring *the* Book, my lord Ranulph, and thy benediction."

"The blessing of him that was ready to perish be upon thee, Father!" prayed Ranulph, feebly. "Alas! thou knowest not, I am excommunicate."

"Excommunicate! and we would know—and we dare to ask too—who is not excommunicate? If the Holy Father had dealt as much in prayers as he hath in curses, he had been long ere this beside Saint Peter in his saintship. Whom hath he not dared to excommunicate? What prince,

friend or foe? What cardinal, when it suited him? What bishop, abbot, or poor priest? My lord Ranulph, when his crafty Holiness will be bold enough to do it to King William, I will become a believer in his power."

"And yet," continued he, "upon this we must not linger. Dear lady, but take thy tablets, and trust me with thine answer to her Highness; and, old as I am, I will speed me. Pardon me, my lord, I have dared to instruct thine esquire about your journey,—Egelbert, methinks he called himself. This fair land hath but recently changed its masters,—yet the bones of Harold, our Hero-King, keep watch upon the shores* against what he hated more than he did the Normans—against Rome!"

* Note J.

CHAPTER XVII.

“ Wherefore stay,
O Death ! the ensanguined yet triumphant wheels,
Which thou prepar’st full often to convey
.....
The Saint or Patriot to the world that heals
All wounds, all perturbations doth allay ?”

WORDSWORTH.

WE need not enter on the interruptions or the sufferings of the martyr-priest, whilst he travelled, with his wife, to Winchester. It will be enough for us to state that every rood he traversed only left him weaker than before. His mind, so sensitive, had never rallied from the pain when, as the result of Hildebrand’s commands, the iron of his fetters had entered into his soul. And, moreover, so severe had been his long confinement, and so miserable his food, that all his physical energies had been unnerved beyond recovery. It was, with the utmost difficulty, and in mute despair, that Elgitha brought her dying husband to the portal of the monastery of Father Osgood.

The poor sufferer had not arrived too soon ; first, because another day, perhaps even another hour, would have found him utterly incapable of travelling farther ; and, secondly, because the Court had arrived that same evening, and the success of Ranulph's interview with King William depended on its promptitude.

It would be as cruel as vain to attempt to describe the anguish of Elgitha, when the gates of the monastery closed upon her husband. Not that she was diffident as to the attention that might be shewn him ; for her interview with the good Abbot had assured her amply. But she knew too sadly, that any hour might be the last of her noble Ranulph ; and a cold dread came over her, lest she might fail to catch his dying look and to inhale his dying sigh.

Neither is it to our purpose to remain awhile among the Brotherhood, who, led onward by their Superior, welcomed him. That Ranulph had braved the Pontiff, in support of those humane ties which were so dear to their brethren among the Secular Clergy, their own sacrifice of which was meritorious in proportion as it was voluntary ; that he had braved the Pontiff, in vindication of those rights of monarchy

for which their own Royal Harold had contended, this was more than enough for them; and it secured him an affectionate and unremitting tendance.

Neither more is it to our purpose to follow Elgitha to the open-gated Convent. True it is that the same ecclesiastical reasoning which influenced the monks influenced the nuns. And we may add more. Woman's ready charities of heart,—charities which, impulsive, though they are, are ever faithful; charities which by their instinctive rectitude seem to set at scorn the laborious and often erring conclusions of man's judgment,—Woman's ready charities of heart folded the weeping Elgitha to her bosom.

The grey of the next morning had barely moved the eyelids of the unsleeping Ranulph, when the Abbot entered the chamber in which he had lodged his guest.

"Ave Maria" and gradually the good monk raised his voice, hoping thus, at the same time that he continued his devotions, to steal gently upon the hearing of him who he hoped might be still a sleeper. "Ave Maria"

"O thou great High-Priest! Thou blessed Intercessor! Thou Intercessor for *all* that come

unto God by Thee ! Aid—aid—thy poor, dying disciple throughout this day.” These words broke upon the Abbot’s ear, and there crowded on him many tumultuous thoughts ; for that *one* prayer unto Christ brought all his own prayers to the Virgin into question.

“ Can the Lord Ranulph rise ?” he asked, in a low tone. “ Meet is it that we be at Court at an early hour.”

“ Speak again, Father,” said the faint nobleman ; “ mine ear is not so quick as heretofore.”

“ Can my Lord Ranulph rise ?” inquired the Abbot, even more gently than before.

“ Did I truly catch thy words, Father, that we must be at Court at an early hour ?” asked Ranulph.

“ If we be not, my Lord,” said the Abbot Osgood, “ we fail—perchance for ever.”

“ Then but suffer mine esquire—Egelbert—to attend me, and, noble though he is, he will, for love’s sake to his old master, apparel me, in all fitness, for the audience.”

“ Thine Egelbert hath not left thee,” replied the Abbot, as the young Graf was drawing near to the bed-side.

“ Egelbert !” said Ranulph, but his voice was

scarcely audible,—“ Egelbert ! thou art a man, thou wilt feel with, feel for, thine ancient master. Then help this poor body to disport its ancient manliness. Ah ! did I teach thee to bend thy bow, and to keep before thee the old Ulysses as thy model in such high war-craft ? And did I tell thee how to bear thy spear, and how to close up thy morion ? And then again, did I not try to mingle with all these lessons, the humbleness and gentle love of our Saviour’s charity. Dearest Egelbert ! would that I had served our Lord Christ as faithfully, as honourably, as thou hast served me !”

“ My Lord, my dearest Lord !” answered the Esquire, in his tears, “ Alcuin and I have ever idolized thy footsteps. Pray speak not so !”

“ Egelbert !” said the Priest-Nobleman, “ help me, for I must present myself at Court. Thou wilt not deem it degrading, wilt thou, my son ?”

The Esquire’s voice failed him ; but his devoted looks, his prompt acts, were answers. At length, and to escape a topic that had become distressing, he replied :—

“ I would to God, dear Master, that our Royal Henry was with the noble Monarch of this fair England !”

“ That indeed would be a happiness,” returned Ranulph, “ but God wills it not.” And, taking from his fore-finger a ring that the Emperor had given him in earlier days, he added, “ When I am dead, Egelbert, and after thou hast seen my Elgitha and our boys safe back to my more than father, the Count Olbert, return to Henry this our pledge of friendship. Tell him, in the name of his dying friend, never to remit his rights, for the priest against the king is abroad, craving power to which neither birth, nor heritage, nor God’s word have given a warrant. Tell him, from his dying Ranulph, that, if he loves his people; if he dreams of the well-being of posterity; if he would have men be men, broad-shouldered men at the plough or in the field of battle; if he would have men free, as well as able, to think, to speak, to feel; if he would have the homesteads of his subjects kept great in peace and calmness; if he would save Christ’s Priests from all that must minister to their own sins and to the sorrows of their flocks; tell him from his dying Ranulph to be firm, immoveable, against the arrogance of Hildebrand. Father, forgive Hildebrand, for he knows not what he doth !”

“ But, dear Egelbert, have I not been wander-

ing?" he added, shortly. "Quick, quick, my Son! help me, and may thy childrens' children array thee for a happier meeting!"

"My brother, be not angry at my impatience, but it is of the utmost moment that we be present when the king approaches," said the kind Abbot, as he re-entered.

"Lean, lean upon my arm, Lord Ranulph," he continued, "and let me hope to enjoy thy triumph."

They both proceeded to the audience-chamber. But Ranulph's strength failed him, and, almost glad of the necessity, he caught the arm of his esquire. Thus supported, he advanced.

He had not been long remaining in this helpless attitude, before his wan eye discerned, in an upper gallery, his own Elgitha. He saw, upon the instant, that no surrounding pomp dazzled her. He saw, upon the instant, that she remained—amid words of mirth and repartee—cold, pale, anxious, watchful. He had scarcely entered the audience-hall and attained a position which she could scan, before her eye caught his. And such was its blessed effect, that he, unconsciously, withdrew his arms from those of his friends that had been supporting him, and he stood erect. Elgitha's tender inspiration gave him a momentary vigour.

The hall at Winchester—in which William the Conqueror met a portion of his nobles during his royal progress—revealed, on this occasion, a scene well worthy the pen of the historian and the observations of the philosopher. To dwell upon its rude architecture, or upon its furniture, is not our province. There are far more absorbing objects for our notice.

The moment on which we take our first observation is that which immediately preceded the entrance of the Sovereign.

“Sigefried, didst thou ever see at a tournament such brave nobles, such hauberks, such swords? Look at the diamonds on yon hilt, friend!” said a light-minded, flippant page.

“Wait, *Sieur Jean*!” said his companion, “and thou wilt see some battle-axes which you Normans cannot lift, much less wield.”

“What did those battle-axes at Hastings, then?” cried the malapert.

“What did they?” replied the Teuton, who, though drafted into the suite of William, could not forbear his love for the poor conquered Saxon. “What did they? They clove your skulls, *Sir Frank*, and, but for your cunning—of which *Cæsar* had forewarned them—these Saxons would

have drunk their mead upon the bodies of thy fathers."

"Silence, sirrahs!" said a harsh voice behind them. It was that of the Seneschal of the Court.

There was the sound of trumpets, and all eyes and ears were quickened in expectation of the Sovereign.

But, as if in disdain of such preliminaries, the great William passed in front of them, and, ascending to the throne prepared for him, he took his seat,—waiting not even for his Queen and ladies.

"Brother Odo," he said, abruptly, "give me my speech!"

His natural brother, Odo—Bishop of Bayeux—whom he had made his Chancellor, placed it upon his knees.

He read his speech. And a deep silence followed. Many a Norman knight and noble was present at that audience; but the dread edicts of the Conqueror made silence to be an act of policy or of fear.

The Monarch became furious,—yet he never so forgot himself as to render useless the astute and calculating tendencies of his character.

"Ye are dissatisfied with your Monarch's will,

are ye? Then ye shall await—not deliberate upon its pleasure.”

He was rising to withdraw, when his Queen Matilda gently detained him. Uncontrollable as he was by any other influences, her one word was irresistible.

“Did I not tell thee, William,” said the Queen, “that the poor Lord Ranulph, the friend, the confidant of my kinsman Henry, would be here?”

“And is he here, in our presence?” enquired the King. He did so, however, in a voice so irritable, that even his Queen, who had been long a student of his moods, began to tremble for her client.

“He is here, my husband, barely able to keep his standing. A true noble is he, as thou hast heard aforetime, but he can no more wear casque or cassock, for your new friend the Pope has for the one disabled his poor head, and, of the other, he has relieved him by the blessing of his ban.”

“What sayest thou! Matilda?” exclaimed the Monarch. “Pope Gregory hath disabled him, so that he cannot wear his casque? So he hath unfrocked him too!—We will mend his head, and, now he has no cassock he will make a

better soldier. The Emperor Henry's friend and officer degraded by a priest!! What ho! my guards, call ye hither the Lord Ranulph, and observe ye, do him all martial honours."

"May it please your Highness!" returned a subaltern, "the Lord Ranulph is sinking rapidly."

"Then we will visit him ourselves," returned the Conqueror. And, turning back, he descended the steps of the platform on which his dais had been placed. Heedless of the wonder and the whispers of his Court, King William marched towards the scene where there lay a dying man.

Around a settle that had been provided on the sudden, there stood the kind Abbot Osgood, and several of the brethren of his monastery. There knelt beside the almost inanimate sufferer, a lady who strove to stifle her sobs.

"Give me but one look, dearest—give me and thy boys but one blessing, Ranulph!" were the words that first broke upon King William's ear.

His Queen Matilda heard these words also, for she was immediately behind him; and her knowledge of the parties gave life and intelligence to her sympathies.

The King was, almost invariably, stern and rugged. Man's sorrows rarely, if ever, touched

him. The emprise of recent years—his subjugation of England namely—had nerved his spirit into more than even his natural determination. He was not a man ever disposed to feel pity, and his recent habits of relentlessness towards the Saxons made him still more severe.

His brow grew dark as his eye caught the Saxon faces that were around the dying man ; but the moans of the kneeling woman pierced his corslet.

“ Thou art Lord Ranulph, the friend of my brother Henry, art thou not ? ” he asked, in tones as tender as their habitual harshness would allow.

The dying Priest-Count made an effort, and, opening his eyes, he looked upon the speaker, but though he strove to speak, he could not.

“ Bear him hence, ye reverend men,” commanded the Monarch, “ and ye will tend him well. Be it so, and your Saxon Abbey shall be inviolate. Sir Abbot, the Lord Ranulph is my friend. Dost thou understand ? ”

The faithful, gentle monks had moved towards the pallet, and were about to lift the dying man, and to bear him to their monastery,—when Ranulph raised himself, and collecting every energy,

feeling that that moment was the last for service to God and to Christ's Church, he put forth his poor, pallid hand, and reverently touched the robe of the great William.

"Deign—deign," he cried faintly, "to listen for one moment to him who will so shortly have to confront the King of Kings. Deign to hear me, great Monarch! I die, because I would never yield that a Sovereign should become a myrmidon of the Pope. I die, because I would never blast the good fame of my wife. To these awful but holy protests the Roman Bishop hath driven me. I say not by what means. But, Sire, let a poor foreigner entreat thee. Heroic hast thou been, and singular in that heroism, in thine answer unto Rome. Maintain thy purpose, King William. Keep thy realm as the refuge of the destitute, gracious Sovereign! And, more than all, pray suffer a dying priest this to supplicate,—conserve to thy new subjects the right of study in God's Book. It will teach them submission; it will teach them loyalty; it will burst, not the laws of thine authority, but the chains of a wicked priesthood; it will bring them, not intercept them, into the presence of their Eternal

Father and Redeemer; it will make them happy and resigned on earth, and full of hope for Heaven."

"Lord Ranulph, thou hast spoken to no unwitting ears," said the King. He was moved, but no one could see it, and he turned away and left the Hall.

One earnest pressure upon the hand of the weeping Elgitha told her that the Queen Matilda was in sorrow and in sympathy on her behalf.

The good monks were about to raise the little couch, but the sufferer had fallen back, exhausted by his effort. Father Osgood even forgot his more immediate office, and was tenderly applying restoratives to the temples of the dying Ranulph.

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of"

"Of death, dear brother, thou would'st add," almost sobbed the Abbot.

"Of death—death!" faintly answered Ranulph.

And then again he continued, "But thou art with me!"

"Am I alone?" he asked, after a few short

seconds. "Am I alone in this cold, dark ravine? Elgitha, love! thou art here, art thou not? . . . Blessed Christ, thy rod and thy staff—they comfort me!"

These were his last words.

CHAPTER XVIII.

“So makest thou faith an enemy to faith ;
And like a civil war, set'st oath to oath,
Thy tongue against thy tongue.”

KING JOHN.

HENRY the Fourth of Germany, King of the Romans, on his ignominious retreat from Canossa, found that the prestige of the power of the Pope—whether spiritual or temporal—was far from sufficient to warrant him—a Sovereign—in his recent and, apparently, most cowardly submission.

He had gone forth, from amongst a mighty host,—one most enthusiastic in his favour. He had gone forth secretly. From that day that host—restrained by its generals—waited amid the valleys throughout which they had been diffused, as if in temporary barracks, but with a manifest impatience. Even to the lowest serf, there had extended a feeling of indignation against the Pope of Rome—Italians though they were. Many and many an honest Lombard yeoman—

inapt to reason upon great Church questions—could not go back, at eventide, from his coarse, cold, chalet on the mountains, and meet upon his sheep-walk the pale, broken-hearted woman whom he had known as his priest's chaste and honourable wife, without cursing the power that had so capriciously and relentlessly blasted her good fame. Many and many an honest Lombard yeoman had taken away from the ditches of his corn-fields the orphan babes whom the Vicar of Christ had sent thither pitilessly to perish.

And such as these were soldiers in the van of Henry's army. They were—unenlightened, some might say—yet in pure nature's instinct they were furious against the cruel, ferocious Pope.

They were, as we have said, in the van of the army, waiting—longing—for some occasion for wreaking God's vengeance upon one whom they knew to be inhuman.

It was, therefore, nothing surprising that, when a bishop of the Church announced to them that their Emperor had succumbed to the usurping Pope, as they most justly thought he was—and as, anon, the Emperor himself approached them,

his robes no longer penitential, but his bearing and his countenance both broken and subdued, their advanced guards received him with pain, albeit the homage of their discipline was unbroken.

He passed the lines of his soldiery amid welcomes just as cold.

His reception at the council-chamber was precisely as equivocal as had been that which his honest, unreflecting troops had paid him.

These counsellors, however, were, for the most part, Italians; and impulse supplied the deficiency of reflection. They gave him honour; they obeyed him.

Nay, more: they reasoned with his Imperial Majesty; and, thenceforth, he became the politic chess-fighter with the Pope: borrowing from the oracles of the Papal Court a code for the circumvention of an adversary.

In pursuance of such subtlety, the Emperor Henry ignored his recent vows, and declared war against the Pontiff.

“Art thou not perjured,” asked Adelbert, “my Royal Master, if—in despite of thy late submission to the Pontiff—thy command for war should be against him?” This said Adelbert, his favoured secretary, who had—but amid the most

fearful peril—followed his Sovereign across the Alps.

“I will answer thee, good Adelbert, provided thou wilt give me a full and thorough summary of the ethics of the Church at Rome. Members though we are of it, we are still Germans,—honest, free-spoken Germans. But wherewith can an open-hearted man meet a knave?”

“Thou commandest me, great Sovereign, and I will tell your majesty its ethics upon *veracity*.”*

“We are to appreciate *falsehood*, and are to employ it just as if it was the poison hellebore. Let it be taken, at the crisis of a disease that threatens to be mortal, and it becomes a remedy; let it be taken without such extremity of peril, and it is immediate ruin. God is the Judge not of our words and actions only, but, moreover, of our purpose and intention. Let Him see anything done or promised by any human being whatsoever, in the cause of his salvation and in His sight—though it may seem to men to be harsh and iniquitous—yet He, looking at the inner piety of the heart, adjudges not the sound of the words but the

* Note K.

“ proposal of the will—for the object of the act
“ and the affection of the actor is to be consi-
“ dered. Wherefore, some men, as aforesaid, may
“ be justified by FALSEHOOD, whilst other men
“ may incur mortal sin by the assertion of the
“ truth.”

“ Thanks—deep thanks—Adelbert !” cried the Monarch, joyfully. “ And when I vowed to Gregory, was I not in mortal peril ? Were not my crown and my dominions at a fearful stake ? And what was the purpose of my oath but to save, from outrage, the prerogatives which God has given me ? Thanks—deep thanks—Adalbert ! If I ruin Rome, it shall be by Rome’s own laws of virtue. If not, I will be responsible !”

It is no factitious—no slanderous—statement, this this, even so early as the Fourth Century, was the judgment of the papal doctors upon the conditions of truth and falsehood. Were this volume other than it is in its form and limits, we might adduce page on page—and from the authenticated teachers of that equivocating Church—to show that in their opinion “ it is not intrinsically wrong to use equivocation, *even in making oath*, whence it is not always perjury.”

Even Adelbert, despite the German honesty of his heart, could not confute the above reasonings of his Royal Master,—so confused, as to moral distinctions, did the dogmas of the Church, of which he was a minister, leave him.

The Emperor Henry, however, acted upon the dogma. Though he had sworn, so solemnly, his dishonourable submission to the authority of the Church,—immediately that he discerned the distaste with which the army viewed his conduct, he assured them that he was driven to do what he did,—that he had done it only for the public good,—and that now, being in a place of safety, he would use all his power in order to avenge the insult.

A long, long, series of conflicts, between Henry and the Pope, followed upon this perjury of the former,—perjury, however, which, we contend, was justifiable in so far as the false ethics of the Papacy were concerned,—flagrant though it was in the sight of that God of Truth who blesseth him “that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.”

Not to speak of the Emperor’s instantaneous recal of the bishops whom Hildebrand had excommunicated; or of the Pope’s intrigues in

encouraging Rudolph, Duke of Suabia, as a rival against Henry; or of the Emperor's numerous efforts to counteract the Pontiff's deposition of his loyal German ecclesiastics: Not to speak of Henry's summary defeat and destruction of Rudolph and his rebel army; or of Hildebrand's continuous fulminations against Henry himself and his faithful vassals; or of the Emperor's climax in daring against the Holy Father, when he deposed him from St. Peter's Chair and appointed Clement III. in his stead: Not to speak of the unseemly conflicts that ensued between the two Vicars of Christ, who never so vindicated human infallibility as when they, by actions, proved their own miserable fallibility,—fighting, as they did, by discharges, from their thrones, of bulls and counter-bulls; by excommunications and counter-excommunications; by depositions and re-investitures; by heresies and orthodoxies: Not to speak of these, we must lead our readers to the closing scenes of the great but unprincipled Hildebrand.

END OF PART I.

PART II.

CHAPTER I.

"Oh! no more, no more!
 You have said, you will not grant us any thing;
 For we have nothing else to ask; but that
 Which you deny already; yet we will ask;
 That, if you fail in our request, the blame
 May hang upon your harshness; therefore, hear us."
 CORIOLANUS.

THE 15th of February, 1083, was a very melancholy day at Rome. The city had been most jealously beleaguered by the Emperor, Henry IV., of Germany, for nearly two years, save and except when the heats and fetid exhalations of the Campagna had compelled him to withdraw his main forces into the healthier and more bracing atmosphere of the Appenines.

Although the Sacred City had been constantly and munificently relieved through the largesses of the great Countess Matilda, nevertheless its inhabitants had to endure the frequent and appalling visits of gaunt famine. It even ob-

truded upon the well-furnished monasteries and convents; and the monks and nuns began to show a spirit of disaffection towards the indomitable Hildebrand—the sovereign of the besieged.

It was night, when a venerable Nun applied at the Flaminian Gate for leave of egress. She had just left a miserable shed, where she had been tending a wretched soldier, one who, from the fearful laceration of a cross-bow, lay a-dying, surrounded by his famished wife and children.

The wardens of the portal gave her a distinct and harsh refusal; and you might have seen her pale countenance become suddenly inflamed, whilst her eye flashed with authority—like a glance of lightning that, as we have often seen in summer, scintillates from beneath a snow-looking cloud.

“Let me, then, see your officer,” she said, in return to their refusal: and the irresistible dignity of her command, sustained by the sanctity of her profession, exacted reverence and obedience from the rude soldiery.

The aged Nun had barely whispered in the ears of the young ensign—who appeared at her summons—when, with a salute of the most pro-

found homage, he eagerly commanded the draw-bridge to be lowered.

With a gentle but lofty courtesy, the nun acknowledged his attentions, and wended her way towards the camp of the besiegers, followed by the awe-struck curiosity of the officer, and the wonderment of his sentinels.

It was very dark. The roads were slippery ; for a frost—unwonted, at Rome, for its severity—had congealed the moisture which the day of that warm climate had distilled. The Nun, however, earnest and fearless in her mission, persevered. She met the videttes of the beleaguers, and, at a word, their arms were grounded, and she obtained a passage. Indeed, a voluntary scout ran before her, torch in hand, and the noisy revellers of the camp hastily broke away, and in a silence strangely contrasted with the recent sounds, she advanced quietly amid their fires.

“Lead me, my son,” she said, “to the Emperor’s pavilion, as the anxious torch-bearer arrested his steps in order to ascertain her will.

As she drew near the tent that, from its size and its magnificence, and the Imperial banner which floated over it, was, obviously, the Royal one,—her aged steps, for the first time, faltered.

Her guide instinctively stopped. That single movement recalled her to her native dignity, and she collected force enough to say,—

“ Proceed, my son.”

There was more delay than she had found before; but, notwithstanding, she, by various and most skilful devices, obtained admission.

“ I would see the Emperor, and alone,” she said to a Royal Chamberlain. “ Bid him, and in his mother’s name, to attend me.”

That chamberlain—one who had been startled from his luxurious temporary repose,—looked bewildered.

“ Bear you, Holy Nun, a missive to the Emperor from his mother, *our* Saint Agnes? Why Her Highness has been dead these seven years!” said the Chamberlain.

“ That is nought to thee, Sir Officer,” replied the Nun: “ Tell your Lord Henry that”—and she uttered some mysterious words of token—
. . . . awaits him.”

The poor dumb-founded Chamberlain hastened to the feast-room, and delivered this strange message to his Sovereign.

The whole of the royal party had been in the highest glee. It had become more uproarious

than was seemly for the Imperial presence. Yet the still jovial Henry was ready, hand in hand, to utter banter and to pardon its return, when the messenger thus broke upon his revelry.

He became suddenly and most deadly pale ; so much so, that his boon companions were alarmed when they saw his change of countenance.

“ Heed me not, my merry men,” exclaimed the Monarch ; “ I have but this moment received news from the Empress Bertha, and, God wotteth, aught from her holy lips may make one earnest. Pardon me, my Lords, a most brief absence.” As he uttered this deceptive apology, he helped his conscience by the ethical conditions of the Holy Mother Church.

The Monarch rose, and, somewhat tremblingly, followed his Chamberlain into an inner room. There, in a calmness which was, evidently, a self-subdued one, he found seated the poor-looking Nun. His Chamberlain’s mysterious words had premonished him, and he—Henry surnamed the Great—stood abashed before her.

“ My Son ! my Son !” the Nun cried, unable to control her feelings at the sight of him.

She had been, from an early to an advanced age, the companion and almost sister of the

Emperor's mother. She had tended her friend's child with a mother's care and fondness. She had passionately loved him, as he grew up before her eyes and beneath her care. Often, oh ! how often ! she had pleaded for him, when accused of worse than the frivolities of his early youth. But her sisterly love for the mother was stronger than that which warmed her for the son ; and when the Empress Dowager retired to Rome, and assumed the vows at St. Petronilla, she accompanied her, and they were both united in self-sacrifice.

The Empress-Mother, shortly after the scene at Canossa, had died in her convent, worn out with sorrow. Hildebrand, with ruffian insensibility, had, previously, compelled her to be a party to his anathema upon her only child ; and, from that time forth, her heart was breaking. Then again, whilst shame, and grief, and indignation, at her son's humiliation before Canossa were widening the fissures of that breaking heart, she had to bid him a last farewell during his route to Piacenza. The mighty elements of maternal love, thus combining with the emotions that had theretofore been convulsing within her bosom, produced a soul-earthquake, and it broke her

heart. She retired back to St. Petronilla, and expired in the arms of the nun who is now before us.

“ My Son! my Son! I have traversed the streets of God’s city, and with pain and faintness. There is hunger, there is thirst, there is pestilence in our Zion. And thou, the child, the only child of our sainted Agnes, art its destroying angel! I bear thee, Henry, her message from her grave. Oh! let the mother, at whose breasts thou wast a suckling, and upon whose knees thou wast so gently fondled, let her pray thee, from her grave, to have mercy for the City of our God!”

“ Mother! my sainted mother!” exclaimed the Emperor, falling upon his knees, “ What, what message hath she sent me? Speak, speak, dear Beatrice!”

“ Listen, great Monarch!” the Nun answered, meanwhile collecting all her ecclesiastical firmness and stoicism, as she looked down upon the kneeling form of her friend’s child.

“ Last night—yes it was last night—and but a few moments before the bells summoned us to Complines,” continued the aged speaker, thus striving by minute detail to aid her decaying memory,—“ Yes, it was last night, I was waiting

for the bells for Complines, when thy mother stood before me."

" Ah ! Great God ! tell me, tell me, dear Beatrice, what said she ?" cried the Emperor, starting up.

" What said she ? Henry !" returned the Nun, " she said this—

" Beatrice ! go thou and tell my poor, excommunicated son, that she, who for years on years hath ceased to be his mother—for Christ's Vicar annulled her parentage—that she henceforth forgets him, for he is the ravager of the fold."

" Mother—mother—mysainted mother !" sobbed the Emperor bitterly : " Didst not thou, years ago, make my revered Ranulph read to me (dearest Ranulph ! thou canst read to me no more !) ? Didst thou not make him read to me, ' Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb ? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee.' Has the Vicar of Christ power in Heaven to make thee forget me—thy son—thine only son ?"

" Emperor Henry !" demanded the Nun, after a long silence,— " But spare our Zion, and thy mother will be thy mother still."

“Mother ! mother ! shall this insatiate despot—this Hildebrand—claim right and power over mine own fair heritage ? Thou mayest, mother mine ! scourge me unto death, and I will bless thee, and I will adore thy memory still ; but—but—yes, this foul, self-called Priest or Pontiff, or what not, shall starve within his citadel, and his people may perish too ; but his fate and their fate will be his own infatuate self-creation.”

“Dear Beatrice,” continued Henry, rising, “thou must be distraught. Would that mother, whose heart Gregory so crushed, now plead on his behalf?”

“Ah ! profane, blasphemous abortion !” shrieked the Nun, the milk of whose fond affections was now turned to gall, ‘Would that the day were blotted out in which it was said of thee—‘a man-child is born !’ Henry, Henry, then thou art still the heartless infidel that the Holy Father hath proclaimed thee ! Then the prayers of a mother, a Saint in Heaven, are unavailing ! Then thy sins have so steeled thine ears against the cries of the hungry widow and the breadless orphans, that thou canst listen to them without emotion ?”

“Lady Beatrice !” replied the Emperor, sternly,

“ next, among the living, to my loved Bertha, thou, my friend, my almost mother, mayst say aught and every thing, and safely. But of this, I pray thee, let me hear no more.”

“ No more ?” the Nun demanded. “ And so thou wilt go and welcome the moans and dying cries of the starved in the City of the Eternal, wilt thou ?”

“ Let me but hear them,” replied the Emperor, “ and they shall find the instant answer of a human heart. But the Holy Father hears them ; let him answer them, or let him give me means of answering them. Curse him ! the widow and the fatherless may, indeed, charge him with their widowhood and their orphanage.”

“ Alas ! alas !” said the Nun, “ thou art joined unto idols : God, the Church, both denounce thy doom, ‘ Let him alone.’ ”

CHAPTER II.

"The highest seats he studiously affects,
Exacts from all punctilios of respects.
O'er his inferiors he the tyrant plays,
Loads insupportable on others lays,
Sticks at no fraud, impiety, or spite,
To reach or keep an arbitrary height."

BISHOP KEN.

WHILE the above painful scene was taking place in the tent of Henry, another which, though not so affecting, was just as critical, occurred within a chamber of the Vatican.

The Pope, clothed in his ordinary dress of white, surmounted by a broad, hanging, scarlet collar, with a star upon his breast, and a black cap upon his head, was seated, and intently listening to the reverential yet fervid entreaties of an ecclesiastic.

"Urge me no more, good Fulco," said Hildebrand, interrupting the reverend speaker.

This he addressed to the faithful friend and disciple of the great Berengarius; of him who, even in that dark age, had so nobly protested

against the doctrine of Transubstantiation. The facts were these. Paschasius Radbertus, a monk, and from A.D. 844-851 Abbot of Corbey, first reduced the fluctuating expressions long in use concerning the body and blood of Christ in the Holy Supper, into a regular theory of Transubstantiation. Favoured by the superstition and ignorance of the times, that theory had, at the period of which we write, become very general. It was then that Berengarius uttered his counter-protest. As was to be expected, that counter-protest was condemned, first at Rome, and, afterwards, at Vercelli.*

But Hildebrand had become his friend, if not his convert to our own Protestant doctrine upon this subject; and to this all-powerful protection Berengarius owed it, that, in the midst of the most humiliating retractations, and his, as sudden, re-avowals of his faith, he was allowed, unharmed, to regain his retirement near Tours.

Many Roman doctors, inconsistently enough, charge Hildebrand with heterodoxy upon this vital question; while, for their own ambitious purposes, they are not slow to adduce his reasonings and his practice in favour of the temporal supremacy of the Popedom.

* Note L.

Be this, however, as it may, Hildebrand felt and maintained the kindest affection towards the persecuted Berengarius. That affection, though more in the form of gratitude than of complacency, was returned ; and when the Pope was beset with perils, when the clamours of all Europe against his inflexible hostility to the German Emperor threatened his throne ; when there arose the tumultuous cries of the suffering Romans, as they called for peace as their only means of obtaining bread ; *then*, the thankful Protestant, who dared not show himself at Rome, despatched Fulco as an humble mediator.

The Pontiff had scarcely finished his interdiction to Fulco, when loud, frenzied shrieks from beneath the windows of the Vatican made even *him* grow pale.

“ Bread, bread, give us bread, Holy Father ! give thy children bread ! ” was the cry of some thousands of famished women, bearing in their arms children that had become skeletons from famine.

Both Hildebrand and Fulco listened, breathlessly. “ Bread, bread ! give us bread, Holy Father, give thy children bread ! ” echoed and re-echoed through the halls of Christ’s Vicar.

Still again both listened, breathlessly, and the poor priest from Tours became ghastly as the words met his ears—

“ ‘ What father is there of you, who, if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone ? ’ Ask ye for bread of our Lord God the Pope, and he will tell ye to eat what the catapults of the Emperor may contribute. Ask Christ’s Vicar,—and his miracles of late have been monstrously abundant—to feed five thousands of ye with two loaves and a few small fishes, and then ye shall eat and be merry.”

These were the words of that same Friar who had uttered his bold denunciation against Hildebrand, when the tears and the prayers of an Emperor fell listlessly upon the implacable heart of the Chief-Priest of the Most High God.

“ Ah ! verily,” continued the Friar—but his words were no longer for the crowd—“ we have not an High-Priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities ! ” This he said bitterly and indignantly, and then moved away.

“ Oh ! most Holy Father ! ” prayed Fulco, breaking silence. “ Pardon thine unworthy son, if he take upon him once more to speak to thee. Are there not ten righteous in this city ? Are

there not twenty? Are there not thirty? Are there not forty? Are there not forty-and-five? Are there not fifty righteous here? Spare—spare it! Thy grateful friend Berengarius—my saintly teacher—commanded me to supplicate your Holiness by the wounds of Christ, and by the loving pity of his Mother!”

Hildebrand was much moved. He was on the eve of relenting; for his heart, that disclaimed almost every human passion, was singularly alive to the very name of Berengarius. But—whilst renewed cries of “Give us bread—bread—bread for our babes,” were almost deafening—his Chamberlain announced that the Synod, which his Holiness had summoned, was in waiting.

Thither went Pope Hildebrand and instantly, —he simply giving a look of welcome to the humble Fulco.

The great hall in the Vatican, where the Synod was assembled, was, though unfinished, such—in its size, in its magnificence, and in its associations—that it alarmed the poor monk, who had been wont to minister only in some rural chapel. And when he surveyed its benches—thinly filled though they were by prelates and by abbots—his awe was on the increase. The copes, the mantles, the cro-

siers of those princes of the Church alarmed him. So did—but with a less spiritual feeling—the men-at-arms by whom they were environed. Although these escorts were, obviously, for the protection and in honour of the ecclesiastics, yet the recent sounds of fury could not, in the mind of the poor monk, be dissociated from the thought of a force purely temporal in its purport.

Fulco took his stand among the immediate suite of Hildebrand, and thence made his observations.

The Pope calmly ascended his throne—knelt and prayed ere he sat down—then, having installed himself in St. Peter's chair, surveyed the whole assembly.

“Is Otho, Cardinal Bishop of Ostia, here?” demanded the Pontiff. “And where, too, are the German deputies? And where are others, who, for their office sake, are meet members of this our council, but whose seats I behold now vacant?”

“May it please your Holiness,” answered a secretary, upon a bent knee, “his eminence the Cardinal Bishop of Ostia hath been arrested by the Emperor. So, likewise, have been the German deputies. For the absence of our other Fathers we can adduce nothing.”

“Then Henry—the King-excommunicate—

has dared again to forego his vows, his pledges, and afresh to beard us!" cried Hildebrand, in a paroxysm of indignation. "Ah!" continued the Pope, "will he never learn from sad experience that—'Petra dedit Petro, Petrus diadema Rudolpho?'" *

"Your Holiness! may it please you," exclaimed Dithmar, a stout, honest-looking German Abbot, "I was on the battle-field with my lord Rudolph,—I tended him upon his death-bed, and—not in confession, otherwise to the world it would have been unknown—in full assembly of his friends, he told us all, when his dissevered hand was shown him—'Behold! this is the hand wherewith I swore fealty to my Sovereign Henry. Behold! I leave him still in force both in life and rule. Bethink ye, who forced me to usurp his throne, how far by your counsels ye have guided me aright'" †

Murmurs—murmurs—spread through the Synod. But Hildebrand, become once more as impassionless as marble, heard and looked.

"May it please your Holiness!" said another Abbot—Udalric by name,—“In this assembly

* Note M.

† Note N.

of the Holy Ghost, I pray for pardon of thee, Holy Father ! and of my Reverend Brethren, as I quote one humble mission to your Holiness, with which I have been made familiar. Theodoric, Bishop of Verdun, a great and learned priest, tells thee ‘ that men so deem thee as to ‘ think that thou—having laid aside all shame— ‘ dost so warrant them that the more bitterly ‘ they curse thee the more acceptable they will ‘ be to God.’ ” *

“ Yea, and moreover,” added Manegold, “ and they who excommunicate—as our times show—destroy God’s Church whilst they propose to save it.”

“ My Reverend Brethren ! ” said a Lombard Bishop—and he paid but the scantiest courtesy to the Pope—“ let me submit to your Reverend Lordships an old protest of the Emperor which he addressed to our Holy Father :

“ ‘ Henry, by Divine Providence—and not by ‘ usurpation—King, to Hildebrand, who is no ‘ longer Pope, but a wicked Monk. You very ‘ justly deserve this title, having been the cause ‘ of that confusion which at present the Church ‘ labours under, and which is so great that there

* Note O.

' is scarce a man but has had his share in your
' curses. For without making much mention of
' other things, you have laid under your feet
' archbishops, bishops, priests, and others of the
' Lord's anointed, to get the applause of the
' people, and to make them believe that you know
' everything, but that they know nothing. . . .
' We have borne with you as long as we thought
' we might with safety do it without prejudice to
' the Holy See ; but you fancied that we did that
' out of fear, which humility puts us upon doing.
' You have advanced yourself against the Regal
' Power ; you have dared to divest us thereof,—
' as if it were you who had bestowed it upon us,
' and as if we had not received it from God, who
' has called us to the Empire, but not you to
' the Papacy ; for you were advanced thereto by
' craft and fraud, and by money you gained the
' favour you had. This favour you thus gained
' has put you upon making use of the sword to
' ascend the throne of peace, and being mounted
' thereon, you have disturbed the peace, by arm-
' ing the subjects against those whom they ought
' to obey, by bringing a contempt upon those
' bishops whom God hath called, even you who
' had no call. . . . You, yourself, have assaulted

‘ OUR Royal Person, though an anointed king,
‘ and one who could not be called to account but
‘ by God alone, nor be deposed for any other
‘ crime but that of apostatising from the truth.
‘ Forasmuch, therefore, as you are ana-
‘ thematized and condemned by OUR sentence,
‘ and by the sentence of OUR bishops, quit the
‘ Holy Apostolic See which you have unjustly
‘ usurped, and let another take your office, who
‘ exercises no violence under the pretext of
‘ religion, but who teaches the pure doctrine of
‘ St. Peter. WE, Henry—by the grace of God
‘ —King, with all our bishops, enjoin you to
‘ descend from the Papal Chair.’ ” *

“ Was not this, my Reverend Lords,” continued the Lombard Bishop, “ was not this the edict of that Emperor to whose fiat the Chair of St. Peter hath for centuries been allowed, by our Holy Mother Church, to have been a subject? Whence—but from the Imperial Majesty—have, for centuries, come the investitures of our Sovereign Pontiffs? Have not those Pontiffs—even in times of peace and quietude—acknowledged those sanctions? Yea, did this our Holy Father claim temporal independence when he brought

* Note P.

our sacred Father Bruno unto Rome? Did he not, at the very moment when he strove to secure to the voice of cardinals, the election of the Pope, admit this principle, though he aimed to circumvent it? Did he, throughout his rule of his protégés Leo, Victor, Stephen, Nicholas, Alexander, fail to act upon it?"

"My Reverend Brethren! *that* same Emperor disannuls any and every act which this tyrant usurper quotes for his own personal vindication. *That* same Emperor is now beneath your walls, proffering the peace of Christ, and demanding only an acknowledgment of his rightful heritage to his crown. That acknowledgment he needs not, for he has his crown, and we, his bishops, honourably and honestly will give him his consecration. But will ye hazard the lives of men, the honour of women, and the blood of babes, for the obstinacy and implacability of *one*—and he God's professed Vicar?"

All eyes were turned towards the Pontiff, in terror at these presumptuous speeches. Those of the Synod who best knew his Holiness felt the most alarm; for—since the hour when he seized upon the Pontificate—many of them had had constant suffering from his ungovernable impe-

riousness of will. To descend to later times, we may say that he was in the Church what Napoleon was in his Empire; and no members of the Conseil d'état of that world-pillager, could have felt more affright at a bold remonstrance being uttered in that soldier's presence, than did each of these ecclesiastics upon this occasion.

In the midst of the anxious stillness that ensued, Pope Gregory—unbroken in spirit by the perils that were around him, and though chafed as a bearded lion by the insult—manfully repressed his fury, in so far as looks and tones could be said to be concerned.

“Pronounce, Evervin,” he said, with a deadly calmness, to one of the chief secretaries, “pronounce, again, my excommunication of this perjured son of our Holy Mother. Read it, this instant!” he continued, and he began to foam with passion, “and let me seal it.”

“Let me first of all, ere your Holiness shall reiterate this awful ban, implore your thoughtful clemency!” cried, eagerly, Alphanus, the Archbishop of Salerno. “Let our Holy Father but bethink himself, that, at this moment, the infuriate and vengeful Henry is at the very gates! As I came hither I heard nought but the cries for

bread from the starving populace, and their direst curses upon the Holy See, calling it wanton in its provocations, and pitiless even when it is, itself, in woe."

"Cursed are ye, brother Alphanus!" said the Pontiff, "when all men shall speak well of ye! Proceed, Evverin! I command thee!"

"Then shall we have to sit, as did the Senate of old Rome, in our curule chairs, and be but sheep for the slaughter," murmured a timid Abbot.

But the murmur reached the ears of Gregory, and it stung his brave but misguided soul. It even deprived him of his former self-command. Rising with high majesty, although the decrepitude of age robbed his form of many of the essentials of external dignity, he impetuously addressed the conclave:—

"Brethren in Christ! soldiers of the Church militant! am I, or am I not, your Lord and Master? Did Jesus Christ give to the blessed St. Peter, or did he not, the power to feed His sheep? Whom, of these sheep, did He except from St. Peter's rule and governance? Did He sanctify any grade of prince or potentate so that St. Peter might not touch it? And will you, because of

our peril in the body, counsel me to invalidate this universal investiture given me by the King of Saints? Fear ye not him who can kill the body, but, after that, hath no more power: yea, rather, I say unto you, fear Him who can cast both soul and body into hell; yea, I say to you, fear Him! Will ye have me, from craven terror, falsify the precedent of our predecessor Zachary, who deposed the King of France? Shall I, at your instance, fall below the principles of the sainted Gregory? Have ye forgotten the examples of those who through faith and patience now inherit the promises? What have our holy martyrs taught ye, if ye quail now? Be steadfast, children!" he continued, "immoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." *

The Pontiff ceased,—and the Secretary had but barely commenced the third ban of excommunication against the Emperor,—when the applause of the Synod, as it cried in response to the speech of Hildebrand, "It is the voice of God, not of a man," were drowned by a storm of shrieks

"Give us bread, Holy Father! Bread! bread! for our babes and for ourselves!"

* Note Q.

The noise was so piteously deafening that the council could proceed no farther. By a sign from the Pontiff it was suddenly dissolved ; and Fulcho—the meek but unsuccessful mediator between the Vicar of Christ and the starving, dying, Roman mothers and their little ones—shuddered as he caught the words of Hildebrand : “ I will laugh at your calamity, I will mock when your fear cometh. When your destruction cometh as a whirlwind, ye may call, but I will not answer ; ye may seek me early, but ye shall not find me ! ”

The Pope called himself God. He sat in the temple as God. And, by a blasphemous misapplication, he employed God’s words as though they were his own ! *

* Note R.

CHAPTER III.

“From their earliest cradles up,
With but a step between their several homes,
Twins had they been in pleasure ; after strife
And petty quarrels, had grown fond again ;
Each other's advocate, each other's stay ;
And strangers to content if long apart.”

WORDSWORTH.

FOR the sake of understanding that which follows we must inform our readers that the Emperor Henry—worn with the implacable hostility of Hildebrand, and anxious to re-assert those claims and those rights in the investiture of the Popedom which were his royal inheritance—deposed Gregory VII., as an usurper, and, with the consent of an ecclesiastical Synod, appointed Guibert, the Archbishop of Ravenna, who assumed the name of Clement III.

This latter Pontiff was now in the camp of the Emperor, waiting for that access to Rome which was necessary for his full enthronement.

It must be borne in mind, that this appointment of an antagonist Pope was, though primarily

the result of civil policy, sustained by other considerations. Henry had, it is true, in former years authenticated the tenure by which Hildebrand held his office ; but the protests uttered by many of the ecclesiastics were unceasing. His advocates cannot gainsay that Gregory VII. was chosen by a tumultuous mob,—one wrought upon by his own preliminary artifices, and the instant influences of his agents. And although we can say nought, on high moral grounds, for Henry's inconsistencies in his treatment of the reigning Pontiff, we charge them chiefly upon those laws of "Falsehood" that had been confirmed by the Papacy itself.

Guibert, or—as we must more correctly term him—Clement III., was now an inmate of the tent of Henry. And on the night of that carousal, which we have described, the following scene took place:—

This Pontiff, instead of tolerating the unseemly revelry of the Emperor and his officers, had withdrawn early. He was quietly—unostentatiously—sitting amid his secretaries, and was dictating his despatches. The curtain opened and, by means of an attendant upon his Holiness, a noble young soldier craved an audience.

“Wherefore that pale, wan face of thine, my Sigbert?” said Guibert, with affectionate kindness.

“May I beseech the counsel of your Holiness, and in private?” returned Sigbert.

“That indeed thou mayest, my son!” readily answered the Pontiff. “We will leave these, my children, at their labours. Shall we walk forth? Sigbert! son of my old friend, something hath disturbed thee.”

The two issued from the tent, and bent their steps towards a spot which they both knew to be retired from the eyes and ears of a curious soldiery. As, however, they threaded their path—rendered uncertain as it was, as to its direction, by the irregular arrangement of the bivouac—varied voices broke upon them from amongst rude groups of men who were carousing at their fires.

“Aroint thee, thou son of Satan!” said a fierce-looking dragoon, addressing an olive-featured Lombard. “Are we to stay here for suffocation in thy vile Italian swamps? Why doth not our noble master let us storm the cage of yonder tiger?”

“Try it—try it—Master Goth!” returned the

Lombard, his eyes glaring ten thousand angry flashes at the scandal cast upon his fair Italy. "Try it—and thou shalt find the bars of yonder cage somewhat hotter than are thine own frost-biting mountains! Ah! ah! mein Herr."

"Come thou to those mountains, friend Guido, and we will warm thee, and with our own Rhine-Wine, instead of this sickening stuff, which, I presume, thou wouldst call good old Falernian. Donner und Blitz," cried the placable German. "Drink with me, Brother Guido, and to the health and action of our own good Lord."

"That will I! thou naughty knave," replied the Lombard, dissembling his resentment, "although I eat some saur-kraut with it."

Guibert and Sigbert passed on amused—but thoughtful.

They came, in their course, to another bivouac fire, which, instead of presenting a scene of honest fellowship, revealed many of the darkest passions. The men were, obviously, deep in their cups, and—as usual upon such occasions—most uproarious and free-spoken in their language.

"Gregory for ever!" shouted one of them; "he is the Father for me. He knows what it is

to give orders. Is he not our Pope? Bah! what Pope have you, sirrah?" he continued, addressing a most mild and self-controlled comrade.

"Mine and thine Emperor's Pope, Master Uhlmann!" was the answer. "And now figure away as thou listest; go and tell the Emperor that thou wilt cut his banner."

"Clement! Pope Clement, for ever!" shouted others of the poor bacchanals.

"Alas! alas!" said the presumptive Pontiff. "Oh! Sigbert, why these conflicts,—why these miserable scandalous quarrels, in the cause of our Holy Mother?"

"Father!" earnestly returned Sigbert, "let us hasten to some spot of secrecy, for my heart is well nigh broken."

"We are near one," answered Clement; "a few steps more, my son, and we are there."

They sat upon the roots of an old beech tree—prepared the one to listen and the other to speak. Very anxious and absorbing were the emotions of both of them, so that the camp, at their feet, lighted up, as it was, with fires, and peopled with men whose varying countenances and attitudes were made distinguishable by the flames; and

calming, elevating, though was the open cope of the azure, bright-starred, heaven above them, yet each was self-occupied and inobservant of the without.

Guibert—the Pope (as far as the Emperor's appointment and the election of a great provincial synod were concerned) Guibert—Clement the Third—was overwhelmed with personal anxiety. What might befall him in this life he recked not. But—although he had chosen his course from the high principle of submission to sovereign power; although he felt warranted, in his acceptance of the tiara whilst another acknowledged Pontiff was alive, because he believed—and, as we think, justly—that an office which was temporal as well as spiritual ought to hold temporal relations—yet all his old Church feelings agitated him, to the very depths. He was habitually pondering upon this, and upon much more.

Nevertheless, the request of Sigbert for a most private audience was a command. The truth was, Sigbert, one of the young leaders in the Emperor's army, was the child of the Lady Elfrida, to whom—before her marriage to his father, Count Sigbert—Guibert, still a layman, had been devotedly attached.

As has been often observed in such cases, the

ancient, but unsuccessful, suitor had followed their offspring with the intensest love. And it was curious, yet most natural, to observe his earnest promptitude in whatever concerned the interests of Sigbert.

Sigbert had been taught how much he could confide in the Pontiff-Elect's affection, and this led him—at a crisis of his heart—to seek for his sympathy and counsel.

“And now that we *are* alone, Sigbert, tell me the news that has so agitated thee,” said the Anti-Pontiff.

“My Father, my more than Father,” said the young nobleman, earnestly,—“My own Emmeline hath sent to me this letter. Let me pray your Holiness to help me with your wisdom.”

“A letter! How could come a letter from the Lady Emmeline to thee, beleaguered as is the Holy City?”

“Pardon me,” your Holiness, said Sigbert, “but be the means of its reaching me whatsoever, pray read it, and give me counsel.”

It read thus :—

“Dear Sigbert,

“Whatever may be my love to thee, and of it thou needest no assurance, the Holy Father

Gregory commands me instantly, and for ever, to suppress it. This his order came to me to day. Thus saith his Holiness: 'Thou, my daughter, art affianced to one who is excommunicate: recollect, my child, that 'whosoever putteth his hand to the plough looking back, is unfit for the kingdom of God.' "

This was part of a note sent by Hildebrand to the Lady Emmeline, a pupil at the Convent of St. Petronilla. She had been long affianced, and with the entire consent of her best affections, to the Count Sigbert. Their long-desired nuptials were on the eve of consummation, when this interdict of Hildebrand threatened to ruin their earthly happiness, simply because Count Sigbert was a faithful vassal unto Henry. So relentless was that Pontiff in his persecution of the Emperor, and so inventive of engines for his destruction, that he excommunicated all who continued faithful to their vows of loyalty. As we have seen, in his sixth dictate, he decreed 'That no man ought to live in the same house with them that had been excommunicated.' And no former or latter age can provide a parallel with those social miseries which he thus inflicted. What mattered it to him how many homes were dispersed

to the four winds of Heaven ! What mattered it to him how many of the tenderest affections were rudely torn asunder, if, in the meantime, he could crush his foe ! The spirit which animated him may be gathered from his own words : “ If any
“ rashly dare to violate this our decree, or treache-
“ rously to deal with the legates whom we send for
“ this peaceful purpose, we bind him with the bond
“ of anathema—we bind him in body as in spirit
“ —we bind him with respect even to the fortunes
“ of this life, by our apostolic power, and take
“ all victory from his arms.” *

The mind of Hildebrand never more showed its power of self-government than in its attention to the minutest affairs of the Pontificate when surrounded by the most imminent perils. It was so in the case before us. Although Henry was at the very gates, and was every day gaining on the city ; though murmurs of disaffection were many and loud within the walls,—yet Gregory found both time and heart to pen the above letter to the Lady Emmeline. It was as if he resolved that there should be one more piteous cry to accompany the deep groan that he foresaw would be extorted from his own mighty spirit.

* Note S.

Pope Clement finished the reading of the letter, and replaced it in the hands of the agitated Sigbert. "Fear not, my son," he said, with affectionate earnestness, "the year of the Lord's redeemed is come. Thou shalt soon see me in the Lateran, and while just anathemas are rolling over the head of this persecuting usurper, one of my first acts shall be to bind thee and the Lady Emmeline by a tie that even Hildebrand cannot unloose."

"Thanks—the thanks of a wounded heart, Holy Father," cried Sigbert: "but how know we but that Hildebrand, ere that be possible, may have compelled my Emmeline to take the vows?—But see, see, Holy Father," he exclaimed, suddenly starting up, "What can these flames mean? Can they be in Rome?"

The situation to which the Anti-Pontiff and Sigbert had retired, commanded a large view of the Eternal City. And true it was, flames were to be seen furiously bursting forth in various districts.

"Great God!" shouted the young Count, "they have fired Rome. Forgive me, my Holy Father, the soldier must be at his post."

And such was his ardour that he waited only

to give his military salute, then bounded forward, like a deer, towards his troops.

When he reached them, his already excited feelings met an additional provocative in the spirit of his soldiery. They were all standing at arms, and in wonder at the absence of their chieftain.

He felt that not one moment was to be thrown away. A few seconds, and he came forth caparisoned for battle, and, springing upon his war-steed, he uttered, in a louder tone than was his wont—"To Rome!"

He had been apprized, by official orders, of the possibility of such a crisis, and had received commands contingent thereupon. While his troops, with a fresh fury, followed him and his suite, all breathing rage against the Romans, and especially against their great ruler, Hildebrand, from whom they had received checks so many and so humiliating, the flames of the Eternal City were spreading with a fearful rapidness.

"The Emperor confides in us, Ulric," he said to his lieutenant, "to seize upon the hill Palatiolus. Let our men be told so. They will avenge my father."

On, on, they all galloped with ardour, but with the highest judgment in their treatment of

their horses. And swift though their speed was, the words and solemn feudal challenges which had been uttered by the lips of their young Lord Sigbert, flew from man to man.

Then came the most terrible of the forms of war. The incendiaries within the city had drawn the attention of the populace to their immediate personal perils ; and the defenders of its ramparts were thinned, and that instantly. Breach was made on breach, and bounding over ruins, over dying men, over dying women, too, who had rushed to the fosses, so soon as thought recalled them to their posts, bounding recklessly, cruelly. over all, these German warriors gained the Leonine suburbs.

The young Sigbert at last drew rein, covered with dust and heat and gore. Martial though he was, we doubt if he could have led so fearful, so merciless, an assault, had he not felt that every moment might be vital to his Emmeline. Young as we have said he was, he had too sadly learned the untiring astuteness and vengeance of Hildebrand ; and the impassable gulph of a nun's vows, one which he knew the vindictive Pontiff might make yawn between him and his betrothed, seemed ready to unfold its jaws.

"Halt!" he shouted, as he and his soldiers gained the Leonine district.

The horses stood fixed as marble. As marble likewise, sat his warriors, sword in hand.

"Ulric," said he, "give mine orders that our men keep this post, by the honour of our house and by the corpse of mine unavenged father—that Lord of their love. Keep them to it, as thou lovest me, Ulric. I must be away awhile."

"Nay—nay—my Lord," answered Ulric. "We will, though thou shouldst take some fifty of us, keep this post; but stir hence, alone, thou (forgive me, my Lord) thou shalt not."

"Stay then here thyself," replied Sigbert, and shouting "Come twenty of you, my men, and follow me!"

The whole corps rushed eagerly to attend their beloved chieftain. Ulric, however, with a voice of sternness, repressed their ardour; and with a wisdom which his love for his master made the more vigilant, picked out a troop and commanded them to tear away.

Sigbert had, meanwhile, daringly rushed on before; and it was only when opponents stopped his progress, that his followers, though so ardent,

could gain upon him, in the hope of bringing him protection.

He was at last brought to bay, and that was not by force and courage, but by the denseness of the crowd of sufferers. A cold revulsion came over his excited heart, when, thus leaving mailed men to contend with, he saw confronting him only a mass of fugitives from flames—some old, decrepid parents borne upon the shoulders of their children; others, women frantically clasping their famished babes to their dry breasts; others, children, rushing on in terror, yet screaming after the mothers who had been absorbed in the shuddering multitude.

“Bread—bread—give us bread, Holy Father!” seemed to be their horrible war-cry. And, with a cold, stone-like, unconcern, they rushed along, on either side of Sigbert and of his men, who had at length approached him.

Sigbert discriminated no one, out of that sea of human beings, save the Friar, whom we have had twice before to notice. *He* was rushing on, in company with the scared multitude, preserving a front of such self-command as proved that he was not scared himself. Many a poor child he saved from being trampled on. Many a poor

fainting woman's arm he, with ecclesiastical authority, linked with that of another that was more stalwart, and so saved her from destruction. Many a young son, panting beneath the burden of his parent upon his neck, he wrought up to more filial heroism. And to add to all, he cried aloud, ever and anon, "Come out of Babylon, my people, and be ye not partakers of her plagues."

Sigbert thought that he recognized this man of God as he who, in the camp of Lombardy, had so often addressed the soldiers against Hildebrand, upon the words of Christ, "My kingdom is not of this world, else would my soldiers fight."

"Would that I could but speak to yon good Priest!" murmured Sigbert.

"Then my Lord shall," eagerly replied a young page, that had been the first and foremost in his following of his leader: and leaping from his horse, he, with infinite agility and skill, threaded his way to the spot where the Friar was, for a moment, standing.

"Listen, Father!" said the young page; and he spoke so reverently that the holy man's ear was instantly arrested.

"To what, my child?" he answered.

"The Count Sigbert, whom thou may'st see yonder, has just now murmured his prayer that he might see thee, were it but for a moment."

"What can the Count Sigbert know of me?" asked the Friar. And yet, as he asked the question, a light of joy and deep, human, affectionateness came over his toil-worn, penance-worn countenance.

"That I know not, Father; but come, come, this instant. Thou—all men—must know my Lord's gentleness. So fear not."

"Fear not, child! said'st thou? Why should I fear from any man, much less from my own—?" Then, pausing for an instant, he said "Berthold!"

At this last word the Page started. "Berthold!" continued the Friar, whispering a few words in the ear of the youthful nobleman.

"Come—come—dear Father! only come and see my Lord. Or *go*, rather; I will stay here and aid these unhappy fugitives to safety."

"Nay, Berthold, the Count will need thee far more than will these poor fugitives. Do thou lead me," said the Friar.

When he gained the spot on which Sigbert was still waiting and watching, with all curious-

ness, what might follow on the impulse of his Page, the scene became to common observers as interesting as it was inexplicable. The Friar allowed his cowl to fall from his forehead, and Sigbert, his page Berthold, and others, recognized the once noble Count of Hanau. The entire history of his movements was revealed ; whether they concerned the part he had taken against Hildebrand and in favour of his Royal Master Henry ; or whether they bore upon his benign and self-sacrificing behaviour on behalf of the poor besieged Romans. For his noble name had been long and dearly known in Germany for its high chivalrous renown. It had, moreover, been the foremost in loyal defence of his Sovereign's irresponsibility to the arrogant, insolent temporal assumptions of the Popedom. It had been, still moreover, famed for the bright, cordial, lovingness of its bearing towards even the lowest serf. But deep personal sorrow had made him eschew all his powers and pleasures. He had abandoned all his possessions, and had retired to one of the severest of the monastic orders.

“ Thou dost summon me, Lord Sigbert,” said the Friar. “ What commandest thou ? ”

“ Mine own, dear, dearest friend, Count

Wifroy!" exclaimed the young soldier—leaping from his horse, and clasping the monk's hands within his own—"Have I found thee at last, though, God only knoweth, perhaps too late?"

"My name, Sigbert," he replied, "is no longer Wifroy of Hanau, but Brother Simon. To that and to that alone I stand here to answer."

As the monk said this, his voice was tremulous.

"But I may call thee 'My second father!'—Oh! for the sake of the Holy Virgin, knowest thou the convent where I may find the Lady Emmeline? My revered Wifroy (pardon my tenacity of that dear name), pity the anxiety of thy friend!"

"Follow me, my son, but let none save Berthold attend upon thee," returned the Friar.

CHAPTER IV.

“ Yet some, noviciates of the cloistral shade,
Or chained by vows, with undisassembled glee
The warrant hail—exulting to be free ;
Like ships before whose keels, full long embayed
In polar ice, propitious winds have made
Unlooked-for outlet to an open sea.”

WORDSWORTH.

IN the midst of the terrific uproar which arose from the conflagration of the city and the entrance of the German forces, there was a noble convent, faced around with dead, silent walls, that stood like the unconsumed bush, though enwrapped in flames. It seemed to be solitude which noise and terror, however near and however carefully beleaguering it, could not desecrate.

And yet, this calm-looking convent now enclosed a scene, and one of its inner chambers listened to sobs and sighs, as terrible, if not more so, as those which were being enacted and

heard without. *There* sat the Lady Emmeline, in her own plain, simple cell, with her poor heart beating, with her alarmed ear vigilant to the least sound, with tears rolling, sometimes in a stream, sometimes with a pause.

She was dressed as for a bridal, and her costume was even more gorgeously enriched with pearls and jewels than her own high rank and taste would have dictated had she been going to the altar to swear her affiance to Count Sigbert. Her weeping maidens had, by the commands of others, thus arrayed her; and she had looked upon them with an almost unconscious indifference, while they opened, and rifled, for their office, the caskets that belonged to her.

The entire process of thus adorning her had passed without one word from herself, and almost without one word of interchange among her attendants. It was now closed, and they, one and all, sat down to weep.

“O! destroy not the little strength that God has left me, dear Agneta!” said the Lady Emmeline to her chief handmaiden.

She spoke this to a fair, beautiful, young girl, who, on having completed the toilette of her

noble mistress, was convulsed with sorrow, instead of gazing, as she had so long dreamt of doing, upon the lovely bride of Count Sigbert. Agneta loved him, as a sister; so did all the others love him, as sisters; for his union of the purest courtesy with far-famed heroism had made their warm affection for the Lady Emmeline re-act upon himself.

“Agneta—dear Agneta!” said her mistress, “why such abandonment to sorrow? Am I not to become a spouse of Christ? And is He not infinitely beyond dearest Sigbert?”

“Yes! O yes!” cried the maiden passionately, “but who has proclaimed the banns? Who framed them, before they were proclaimed? Who, as he proclaims them, tramples upon two fond hearts, forces thee to perjury before high heaven, and thus drives into the arms of Holy Church a heart-broken—though not an alien—spirit? Who,” she continued with increasing vehemence, so that her small feet stamped with excitement, “who has done all this, and why?”

Sobs and excess of passion stopped her hitherto gentle voice for a few moments.

“Who has done all this, and why?” she again demanded, while her finely-chiselled upper lip curled with scorn. “Who, but this monster Pontiff? this cold, marble-hearted Hildebrand, who, if the sun loved him, would—could—feel no warmth in answer. Who? but this priest of blood. Did he not crush my mother, because she would not desert my loyal father? Is he not now, with insatiate obstinacy, watching a pyre of poor old men, women, and children, rather than be humbled? Is this the Vicar of Christ? and shall he dare to stand father at the altar of his meek and merciful Master? O! Lady Emmeline, dare and be bold!”

“And become an excommunicate from the Church of God?” faintly asked Emmeline.

“Excommunicate? Excommunicate? O! yes, indeed; not so much for the sake of Sigbert, as in protest against a cruel, remorseless spirit, that blasphemes the humanity of Christ. Yes, indeed; would He—our Lord (and she crossed herself)—would He who smiled at the marriage of Cana,—would He who travelled far in order to give back Tabitha to her parents,—would He who returned the son to his mother at Nain,—would He who wept with Mary and Martha at the

loss of Lazarus, ask thee to break thy heart, and in no holy cause, for His sake? Excommunicate! Excommunicate! And why? Because Count Sigbert obeys God's law to 'render unto Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's.' Dearest Lady Emmeline!" cried Agneta, frantically, "dare and be bold!"

Had a moment more elapsed in quiet, the poor young devotee would have caught courage. But above the shouts, and shrieks, and oaths of the burning and conquered city, the deep bell of the convent sounded; the little cell was entered by the Lady Abbess; the fainting novice was summoned to the chapel; the long, triumphant hymeneal song commenced, and

Meanwhile the Friar, in the lead of Count Sigbert and his page, was stalking vigorously forward through heaps of ruins—careless whether or no the embers burnt his sandals—and with a speed that threatened to out-distance the young soldier.

When he had approached the wicket of the convent, Father Simon, with a sign, stopped the advance of his followers. These two were breathless, both from their speed and their anxiety. He was on the eve of knocking at the wicket,

when a sudden thought crossed him, and returning back to Sigbert, he said in whisper, "In ten minutes enter, if thou seest, hearest nothing of me. The wicket I will arrange to keep left open."

These ten minutes of mortal anguish passed away. Strange to say, its very intenseness began to benumb the faculties of Sigbert; and but for his quick-eyed page, some others might have seen them waiting.

"Now, now, my lord! to the rescue!" cried the impetuous youth. "Already—see yon dial, for the flames around us show it—the eleventh minute will have gone, if we obey not the Lord of Hanau!"

The Count's apathy, in a moment, gave place to his former ardour. He fled to the wicket, and to his unutterable joy found it open and deserted. Onward, and with Berthold immediately behind him, he threaded numerous corridors—his excitement on the increase, both from the blaze of light which he detected in a building that was obviously the chapel, and from the sounds of voices, the animation of which he could not mistake as singular for those retreats of hallowed quiet.

He had drawn near the chapel without meeting any of the servitors of the convent. Its great valves were left open,—so confiding in the seclusion and security of their house were all its inmates. Curtains only hid the scene of the interior from him. But they were not dense enough to imprison sounds.

“In the names of Almighty God, of his Son our Saviour, of our Virgin Lady, I forbid these foul banns!” said a loud voice,—one so bold and so trumpet-tongued that a mere listener might have thought it came from some warrior on the field of battle, but the notes of which, so Sigbert’s ear instantly detected, were from the lips of the mysterious Friar.

With rare self-command—which arose from his profound confidence in the skill and power of the Brother Simon—the Count controlled himself, and listened. The earnest curiousness of his page, however, was under a looser rein, and slightly disparting the curtains, he both saw himself and partially revealed to his master what was going on within.

Before the altar there stood a bishop, clothed in his gorgeous cope, with his crosier held immediately below him by an acolyte. He was facing

the assembly. On his left hand there knelt a trembling novice, not daring to raise her eyes towards the bold speaker, yet showing by a flush upon her face—mingled as it was with excitement and hope—that the interference was anything but displeasing.

The very bishop looked aghast at the holy man, and so quailed before his commanding interdict that the service paused.

“Again,” he said, “I, Simon, the unworthiest of God’s servants,—I, whose soul’s vows are to collect for the fold of Christ, forbid these banns, although they are between this dear child and Christ”

“Brother Simon!” faintly replied the Bishop, “thou must be distraught. One so holy as the Church knows thee to be cannot be blasphemous. We will proceed,—and do thou hence betake thyself, and to the severest penance.”

He was in the act of putting the *last* question to the novice—an affirmative to which would have severed Sigbert and the Lady Emmeline for ever—but the loud and rapid strokes of mailed boots arrested him.

“Whence this unseemly—this obscene—intru-

sion upon one of our holiest rites?" cried the Bishop, with a forced courage.

"Whence?" answered Sigbert, in a voice almost suffocated with rage and grief. "Whence, Sir Priest? From whom thinkest thou, but from Henry the Fourth, Emperor of Germany and King of Rome? Whence, askest thou, but from his Holiness?"

"From his Holiness, sayest thou?" returned the Bishop. "Know, then, that I am here to perform these heavenly nuptials, and by his special instance. And as to that name of Henry the Excommunicate, how darest thou, young man, utter it within the walls of a Christian temple?"

"I dare utter it, Lord Bishop, and I dare do more!" answered the Count. "In the name of that high Sovereign Henry,—unto whom thou and the cruel Hildebrand are false, perjured, traitors; and in the name of the Holy Father, Pope Clement III.—I, too, forbid the banns! Ye accursed, false ministers of God, ye want the Lady Emmeline's domains, I trow—while ye are careless of her heart."

"Anathema, maranatha!" shrieked the Bishop;

and suddenly a band of sbirri strove to surround the Count. The Lady Abbess—fierce, masculine, in her character, and feline in her movements—had gradually signalled to her immediate sisters to encompass the professing Nun. The case was desperate. Each individual was being borne along by passion—even Sigbert himself, who had drawn his sword—save the majestic Friar. He watched everything, and the only new indication upon his countenance was a triumphant smile.

His calculations were far-sighted, though deeply anxious; and he was content to hope that, could he but postpone the rite until the morrow, some blessed accident might intervene.

He was, however, to be disappointed,—and most agreeably. For the little faithful troop who had followed Sigbert from the hill Palatiolus were not content with the Friar's interdict to follow their young master. At a distance behind him, but most vigilantly, they had tracked his footsteps. They had stopped when he stopped. They had passed through the wicket of the convent soon after he had passed. They had stood in silence and remote from him, while Berthold had opened the curtains of the church. They had heard all, seen all. They lingered in admi-

ration of the collected heroism of their chieftain. But, no sooner had they learned the crisis—from the keen-eyed look of the young page—than they calmly, resolutely marched up the aisles. They might have taken summary vengeance upon the designing sbirri; nay, the sacred robes of the Bishop might not have saved him, had not the Friar interposed.

“Shed no blood here, my men!” he called to them; and some of the oldest started at sounds with which they had been long ago familiar. “Profane ye not God’s sanctuary. Yet take and guard your prisoners, for they can be treacherous.”

The Lady Emmeline had fainted, chiefly at the sight of Sigbert, whom—by wiles and threats, borrowed from this world and another—Hildebrand had frightened her into repudiating. (And the sole offence that even the Pontiff could allege against him was his fidelity to his sovereign!)

The Count bounded madly forward.

“Emmeline! my own Emmeline!” as he gazed, in bitterest anguish, upon a form that appeared inanimate, “Emmeline! Oh! my God! have I murdered thee?”

His gestures were becoming uncontrollable,

and would have been so utterly, had not his old playmate Agneta touched his arm, whispering gently,—

“ My lord, see, she has but fainted ; be calm, be watchful, and be *quick* ! ”

This advice was of absolute importance ; for the wily Lady Abbess was giving directions for her removal. In this she had succeeded but for the stern words of the Friar :—

“ Mother, *you* know me well, and you know mine authority. But do you, or let yours touch one hair of the Lady Emmeline, and by the sword of Charlemagne (O ! pardon me, gracious God, for so adjuring) thou shalt be a solitary Nun for evermore. Retire ! ”

“ Yet once more,” continued he, “ and it must be to *you*, lord Bishop ! You are free ; free to return to the master that did send thee on this ungodly mission ; free to tell him—to his face—that the Friar Simon, once Lord of Hanau, scorns his anathema, for it cannot be the anathema of Him ‘ who came not to to be ministered unto but to minister ; ’ One in whom there was *no guile* ; One who sought not his own. Rather than yield Hildebrand aught of homage, I would reseek the old Scandinavian forests of my fathers,

for Thor and Odin could never have been more merciless than is he."

The Lady Emmeline had, by this time, regained her consciousness. One gentle, confiding, grateful glance satisfied Sigbert of her joy and hope,—and, reverently raising her in his arms, he bore her from the convent.

The smiling page was no unwilling escort of Agneta and her companions.

The faithful troop—still keeping a strict watch over their prisoners—closed around as a body-guard.

But the Monk had vanished.

CHAPTER V.

“ O Conscience ! into what abyss of fears
And horrors hast thou driven me ; out of which
I find no way, from deep to deeper plunged.”

MILTON.

THE conflagration at Rome, of which we have been speaking, was far inferior in its devastations to that which had occurred in the first year of the siege. It might almost be called an accident of the assault of the Emperor's forces. Had it, as on the former occasion, been merely the work of a few incendiaries, the still undiminished courage and skill of Hildebrand might have repulsed the assailants. But by far the majority of the people had become bitterly disaffected to his Popedom, the result of partly their prolonged sufferings, partly of the large bribes which, through the aid of the Greek Emperor Alexis, Henry was enabled to scatter amongst them ; partly, if not chiefly, of their moral indignation at the Pontiff's unchristian implacability.

Add to this, in a moment fatal to his character

for uncompromising constancy, the Pope had acquiesced in offering an alternative to his Imperial enemy, which was not more insulting to the latter than it was degrading to himself. He proffered to Henry, either to crown him, in the Church of St. Peter, in due form, in the event of his penitence and submission to the Holy See ; or that, though he continued in impenitence and insubmission, the Imperial diadem should be let down to him at the extremity of a rod from one of the windows of St. Angelo, *if* he would withdraw his army.*

This, we say, was fatal to Hildebrand's character for uncompromising constancy. Nay more, it threw a veil of ridicule over conduct that had previously been so lofty. Pasquinades there were, innumerable, at which the starving population grinned in their misery, as he, who had held commanding language suited to the Supreme Being only, was now described as the Holy Fisherman, rod in hand, and with a crown as a seductive bait.

" Can this be," they said, " the same infallible Vicar of Christ who so recently and so haughtily exclaimed, " Rouse yourselves and be strong. " Conceive a lively hope. Have before your eyes

* Note T.

“ the banner of your leader, the Eternal King.
“ It was his word, ‘ In your patience possess ye
“ your souls.’ And if we are anxious, through
“ the grace given to us, to crush the ancient
“ enemy, and to make light of his devices, let us
“ endeavour, not only not to shrink from the
“ persecutions which he excites against us, but,
“ for the love of God, and in defence of the
“ Christian religion, to brave them ?” *

Thus he lost the prestige of his mighty name. Heretofore all men knew him to have been crafty, but the toils which he had laid were so comprehensive, and so unconfusedly implicated, that they chiefly shewed his genius. Now, however, the device was childlike as it was ignoble; as little-minded in its insolence as it was transparent.

And not all the skill and policy of Gregory and his adherents could recal the people to their loyalty. They who, aforetime, had so often and with such bravery repulsed both Germans and Varangrians, and had so long endured, with submission, such unparalleled distress in his defence, would fight and endure no longer. Once, their Pope’s inflexibility was heroic, and, however much they might have wished it otherwise, it

* Note U.

diffused heroism among themselves. Even if he had unconditionally surrendered to his antagonist, they might still have revered him—from the belief that he had yielded in pity for his people—and have beaten back the enemy.

On the very evening mentioned in the last chapter, while Sigbert was bearing in his arms the almost lifeless body of Lady Emmeline, while crowds were flying from the flames in the Leonine city, while Gregory, himself, was striving to calm and restrain the affrighted fugitives ;—on this very evening, March 24th, 1084, an immense mass of men surrounded the gate called the Lateran.

Outside the gate, the besiegers were more than ordinarily concentrated, and this fact, united with the tumult of shrieks and shouts which boomed from the distant Leonine city, led every one in the neighbourhood to anticipate a desperate assault.

“ Down, down, with the drawbridge !” shouted the Monk, who, on leaving Sigbert and his party, had walked with all haste to this opposite quarter.

“ Down, down, with the drawbridge, my men, and give a grateful welcome to your rightful

Sovereign. Henry, my children, brings with him a Pontiff after God's own heart; one who will weep with you who weep, and rejoice with you who may rejoice; one, who has a charity that seeketh not his own, that is not easily provoked."

"Treason! treason!—Pope Gregory to the rescue!" cried the officer of the guard-house, and a body of the sbirri flew to his standard, and advanced, sword in hand, upon the Friar.

But a dense mob had affectionately drawn a circle round him, and the soldiers paused under the feeling of their own utter impotency.

"Men and Brethren," exclaimed the Monk—his tall majestic stature giving him a command of the whole audience—"Will ye be tame in your submission to yon despot of the Vatican any longer? Will you, for his sake, any longer starve your babes, and shed your blood? And for whom? For a traitor against your earthly Monarch? For one who, to gratify his own ambition of universal sovereignty, but under guise of zeal for the sanctity of the Priesthood, and its purity of morals, hath laid aside the humility of Christ's servant; hath set at nought all civil obligations; hath cancelled the most holy vows?

Hath Christ sent him, think you, to defy his own command, 'let him that is the greatest among you be as your servant?' Sent He him to annul His own Prescript, 'Those that are joined together let no man put asunder?' Brethren—brethren—would our Lord have watched *you*, and with relentlessness, as you or yours pined away in famine, or were consumed in flames? Down—down with the drawbridge, and give welcome to your deliverer."

"Down—down with the drawbridge!" echoed a thousand voices, and the whole mass bent their steps towards the gate.

Even the officer, when he had heard the Friar, broke his sword, exclaiming, as he threw away the pieces, "Adieu, old friend, adieu for ever! Let the Pope fish for himself: I am no craven angler."

It was then that the troops of Henry gained a free and bloodless admission to a city, before which, and for three years, they had been so severely tested. The Emperor lost not one second, when the news reached him, but accompanied by Guibert, the anti-Pope, he rode through the streets, now elated with the shouts, and anon shuddering at the starved skeletons of the people.

His forces had seized upon the palace of the Lateran, and there the Emperor and Clement rested for the night.

But no shouts of gratulation and of triumph fell upon the ear of Hildebrand. As if he had been a warrior of the sternest mould, he was uttering the most heroic language to his partizans, as they strove to stop the flames.

“Recollect,” exclaimed the Pontiff, “that soldiers of this world are by a trifling stipend induced to put their lives in daily jeopardy for their earthly masters ; and what suffer we—what do we—for the King of Kings, and for the reward of everlasting glory ? What dishonour, what reproach, what ridicule, is cast upon us, if they, for worthless toys, shrink not from death ; and we, with a celestial treasure, with life eternal in sight, shrink from the encounter of persecution ?” *

Brave words were these, and they would have been in the most holy keeping with a scene such as had often taken place in an age more primitive, when a bishop and his flock, all harmless, all unassuming, all gentle and forbearing, not one of whom had even raised a finger of

* See Note V.

anger or of threat against a Roman Tyrant, were calmly waiting for crowns of martyrdom. But in the mouth of one, who, in the character of Christ's Vicar, had embroiled almost every prince of Europe with his subjects, by his priestly claims; who had persecuted kings and emperors until they kissed his feet; who had immured and starved or tortured priests and prelates, merely because they had differed from him on *civil* questions; who had branded innocent wives with the foulest name, and dishonoured children, unconscious of a fault, on the ground of their fathers' loyalty; in the mouth of such an one,—no vigour in his intellect, no vastness in his comprehensive purposes (let these purposes be right or wrong), can warrant us in calling them otherwise than the expressions of a terrible self-delusion, or of an unpardonable hypocrisy. Let us hope that it was the former. But he was infallible!!

A calm observer might have seen the flushed and earnest countenance of the Pontiff suddenly grow pale, when, on having uttered the above words, a Cardinal, the nearest about his person, whispered with alarm—

“The Emperor Henry, may it please your

Holiness, is already in the Lateran. The populace have been traitors, and the gates are opened."

"Lord! what wouldst thou have me to do?" prayed Hildebrand, with eyes and hands uplifted.

"Do?" exclaimed the Friar, whose movements were so strangely rapid that he had found time to regain the quarter where Pope Gregory was posted. "Do? I will thee, Hildebrand (and as he spoke he threw off his cowl), the voice of the blood of my murdered wife, the voice of the blood of my three brave sons, as it cries from the ground, tells thee what thou shouldst do. Perjured despot in Christ's fold!" continued he, "Thou didst say 'my rock standeth strong, it shall never be moved.' Has thy Holiness forgotten thy lie (that lie, O God!) by which thou gainedst the entrance of thy troops within my castle? Hast thou forgotten thy smile of vengeance when it was told thee that when thy own myrmidons advanced to seize me—Count Wifroy—my boys fell in my defence, and my loved wife, as a shield to her husband, was transpierced by their arrows? Hast thou forgotten this? And what thought of memory hath ever soothed remorse within thee,

if thou art not remorseless ? Was all this in the cause of virtue and religion ? Was it not because the Lord of Hanau had vowed allegiance to his Sovereign, before God and on the Holy Sacraments ? What shalt thou do, askest thou ? What would Christ have thee to do, thinkest thou ? Bend, bend down upon thy mother earth, bend down upon her, her bosom is more merciful than is thy heart ; mourn there as thou hearest her weeping for her children whom thou hast slaughtered ; and then, but not till then (and then I will forgive thee), the blood of Christ shall cleanse thee from all sin."

Such had been the consternation of the whole audience, even of the Pope himself, that no steps were taken to arrest the daring speaker ; and the Monk again vanished.

The panic bade fair to continue longer ; for Hildebrand's usual self-command of features had utterly forsaken him. The vigorous old man trembled like an aspen-leaf. His eye, ordinarily of such unparalleled brilliance and concentration, became glassy and rolled at its own pleasure. Twice he essayed to speak ; twice his tongue—that eloquent tongue—failed him. He clung for support to the balustrade over which he had been

addressing his troops and the multitude ; and the only words that broke from him—and which were audible to the Cardinal, who was at his side—were, “Hast thou found me, O ! mine enemy ?”

The panic among them all bade fair to continue longer, but renewed clamours and insults ; the appearance, here and there, of the Imperial soldiers ; the imploring intreaties of his friends, at length broke down the stubbornness of the Pontiff.

“Then to St. Angelo, if it must be so !” he said, bitterly. “Oh ! mine enemies, ‘why say ye to my soul, flee as a bird to your mountain ?’”

His attendants, urged by their own personal alarm, were not slow to obey his orders.

They were about to lead the way on the open path which led to the castle, when the excitement of the people and the approach of the enemy made them to counsel, to beg, the Pontiff to fly to St. Angelo by the subterranean road which led from the Vatican to the castle.

It was with indescribable reluctance that Hildebrand consented ; for no personal danger, however imminent, was known to make the venerable—though wrong-minded—hero quail.

And the necessity of agreeing to this proposal wounded him more than any of the previous and many humiliations of his long and chequered life. But even from this his daring, special-pleading religionism extorted comfort.

As he traversed that dark and almost suffocating tunnel—on a pause between the lugubrious wailing of the choristers that preceded him, torch in hand—the Pontiff's deep, sonorous voice might be heard : “ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me. Thy rod and Thy staff, they comfort me.”

“ Ah !” he continued, speaking to himself, “ this leads to the tomb of Adrian : it may be my tomb !”

From this it is not to be inferred that despondency was creeping over a once dauntless heart. The presentiment of death differently affects different men. It may, it must, terrify and unnerve a guilty and uncleansed conscience. It may, it often does, dispirit a true Christian's heart, which—awake to the claims of divine law and its own responsibilities—trembles at the prospect of God's judgment seat. But there is another class of men who—so absorbed are they

in the obligations of what they conceive to be their duty—as calmly welcome their last moment in that path as they have welcomed its numerous and varying antecedents.

Such was the case of Hildebrand. Proud, ambitious, implacable, cruel Priest as he was,—yet, by the false light of self-deception, he beheld himself the witness for the humble, lowly, forgiving, pitying Saviour.

He had scarcely seated himself in the chair provided for him—on his entering a chamber in St. Angelo — when, combining his ancient courage with his funereal prospects, he exclaimed —“ We shall quell and make of no account “ the raging of the waves, and the madness of “ the people. We shall then be joined to our “ Great Head, who sitteth at the right hand of “ God the Father, and who hath declared to us, “ that ‘ if we suffer, we shall also reign with “ Him.’ ”

Then his mind reacted upon matters that were more immediate.

“ Desiderius !” he said, turning to a long and faithful friend, “ see thou that our keep—it may be our grave—be prepared to resist the onslaught of the heathen.”

“Of that I have had a care, may it please your Holiness,” replied the Pontiff’s follower. “But O!” continued he, “if your Holiness hath ever had aught of confidence in me; if ever I have gained your ear in counsel,—hear your servant now! Holy Master, hear me!” and he fell upon his knees. “Never, when I might have prayed your Holiness, in better times, have I asked one favour. Grant me this one, and but this one!”

“This one, and but this one!” murmured Hildebrand. “He would retire to his estates, and avoid his and mine own peril.”

“Your Holiness doth wrong me!” cried Desiderius, and he arose erect. “But other and—may the Holy Virgin grant—happier hours may prove the surmise to be foundless. Yet let that suspicion weigh upon me till anon. *Now* let me implore the Holy Father to relent. Hath not thy servant for the last seven years of devoted, dutiful, love implored it?”

“Relent, Desiderius!” answered Hildebrand. “Relent! never. Relent from what? from having claimed power over the princes of the earth; to bind and to unloose them; to authenticate or to disannul their titles; to retain within St. Peter’s hands—and undisputed—the powers

to appoint and to depose ; to consecrate and to excommunicate each and all, 'whether they be things on earth, or things in heaven, or things under the earth?' Relent? never! Your friend Henry may burn Rome to ashes; nay, he may scatter the ashes of this aged body to the four winds, ere I forget the order, 'be steadfast and immoveable.'"

"But your Holiness has more than wavered," sarcastically interrupted the noble Roman, Malatesta. "Your Holiness has already swerved from your law infallible. Else why that offer to the Emperor of the mummary of a crown, held forth, from these chambers, as from a fishing-rod?"*

"Alas! alas!" cried the Pontiff, "and even that, 'that was the hour of the power of darkness.'"

"Then the devil's hour hath been a long one!" said a voice, sternly. It was that of the Friar who had again found means of confronting the murderer of his house. His retreat was, as formerly, and from the same causes, successful.

"Oh! hast thou found me again, mine

* Note W.

enemy?" cried the Pontiff,—whilst his scared looks betokened the terror that was within him.

In reverential delicacy, the entire of his attendants withdrew from the apartment, and Hildebrand was left alone. In his seat he sat,—sorrow, remorse, forebodings, for awhile overwhelming him. And so vehement—so uncontrollable—were his feelings, that words escaped lips that had hitherto been sealed at his pleasure.

"Ah! begone!" and he shuddered. "Begone, ye shades! Why come ye hither, in mine hours of adversity, to mock me?"

"Begone!" and it seemed to his excited fancy that a venerable Nun was their leader. "Begone!" and the Pontiff thought he saw the aged Dowager Empress Agnes.

"Wherefore should I begone? Didst thou not sanction, if not direct, the corruption of my imperial son? Didst thou not lead him into acts of indiscretion and of guilt, the more easily to usurp thy power over his crown? Didst thou not pour into mine, his mother's, milk, the poison of that church, which a world to thee unseen tells me is a false one? Didst thou not make—and by thy threats—didst thou not make *me*, his mother, witness and ratify his ex-

communication—and for nought but to raise another step to the throne of thine illimitable rule? Hildebrand!" the spirit seemed to say, "Hildebrand! meet me before Him who said 'I came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them.'"

The Pontiff had no time to recover breath, before another form visited his phantasy. It was that of a noble and a priest; wan and worn, yet with an eye of unquenched brilliance,—calm and forgiving though it was in its expression.

"Forbear! oh, forbear! In the name of the Holy Virgin, in the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost!" shouted Hildebrand. "Forbear, Count Ranulph! In pity forbear!"

"Forbear?" the spirit seemed to ask. "I come to thee in love and pardon, Hildebrand. Thou didst, in reality, murder me, because I swore unto the Lord and went not back, when I vowed fealty to my sovereign and would not dishonour it at thy command. Thou didst, in reality, murder me, because I would not defame the wife of my bosom and the children of our love. Thou didst, in reality, murder me, because I would not prefer thy prescripts to God's Holy Word: but hear me, Pope Gregory, as thou art

called, the Eternal God hath sent me on this mission,—may His Spirit give it power ! ‘ Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings. Cease to do evil, learn to do well. And come and let us reason together, saith the Lord ; though your sins be as scarlet they shall be as wool, and though they be red as crimson, they shall be white as snow.’ ”

We need not say that all these were the phantasms of a mind that was overwrought. But—in so far as truth is real, not ideal—these phantasms were real to fearfulness.

The Pope was afresh startled by a voice from behind the arras. It was one positively audible. The Friar had there seated himself, and thence he uttered—

“ ‘ Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.’ ”

CHAPTER VI.

“Anathemas are hurled

From both sides : veteran thunders (the brute test

Of truth) are met by fulminations new—

Tartarian flags are caught at, and unfurled—

Friends strike at friends—the flying shall pursue—

And victory sickens, ignorant where to rest.”

WORDSWORTH.

ROME witnessed a strange anomaly upon the following day. Yet was it one that had occurred, not infrequently, before. In the bosom of that Church which called and still calls herself indivisible,—which claimed and still claims her oneness as her proof of catholicity,—there were and are schisms as numerous and as alienating as can be found in the past or present history of any society calling itself Christian. Let her own historian—Platina*—enumerate some of them. Benedict V. antipope to Leo VIII. ; Boniface VII., Benedict VI., and John XIV. all opposed ;

* Note X.

John XVII. against Gregory V. ; Silvester III. in conflict with Benedict VIII. ; Honorius II. contradicting Alexander II. These are but a few of the occasions on which she had uttered uncertain and discrepant sounds up to the time of the tale before us. Time and space would fail us did we more than mention similar instances in after ages,—when Gregory VIII. and Gelasius II. ; Celestinus II. and Honorius II. ; Anacletus II. and Innocent II. ; Victor IV. and Alexander III. ; Nicholas V. and John XXI. ; Clement VII. and Urban VI. ;—each anathematized the other ; each disannulled his rival's laws and judgments ; each invested with apostolical succession his own followers, and pronounced all other orders to be invalid. And seeing that of none of these irregularities hath the Roman Church ever purged herself : seeing that her returns to unity have been forms of compromise between contesting parties, not the triumphs of an ancient truth—where is her boasted oneness ? What Roman Catholic can prove to his own conviction that the decisions which guide his faith are not the voices of usurpers ? What one can confidently be assured that the oil of consecration which fell upon the

head of his soul's priest did not drop from the wrath-vial of some spurious Pontiff?"

The mass of human beings that crowded around the Lateran Church, this morning, was very vast, and it was so heterogeneous in its character, and thus grouped together such startling contrasts of priest and noble, rich financier and starving pauper, that any observer, however habitually discriminating, might have been pardoned for his distraction. But we are more removed from such disturbing forces of the senses; and, therefore, we may descry in the midst of all these variegations of dress and of grades **ONE MAN**. He is that Friar of whom we have had to speak so often.

He is standing upon the prostrate trunk of an ancient pillar; and this his elevation, united with his own personal height of stature, gives him a command of sight over the entire assemblage. His posture is that of one who is unobtrusive, unaffected; and yet his bare look, even more than his robe as an ecclesiastic, keeps all around him from any impertinent interference. He is watching—listening.

Quickly every word—aye, every whisper—of the crowd is hushed, for there are sounds in the

distance, of the approach of important personages. The Monk looks thoughtful, and sundry efforts at self-command betray themselves as the train draws nearer. We need not speak of the aspect it presented, save to say that numerous acolytes, all surpliced, and with lighted torches, and intoning the Psalm, "Open, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in," led the van. Then followed a gorgeous company of mitred men, with crosiers, the gold and jewels of which beamed forth rays so deeply lustrous that the spectator had to withdraw his sight. Then came a pale, but firm-looking man, clothed in white and scarlet, and marked out—as the chief actor in this great drama—by the canopy which was borne over him. The crowd looked, with the intensest interest, upon his person; but it was soon divided, if not eclipsed, by a sight that followed. It was that of a young Sovereign who, though his fretful horse threatened to absorb all his care, was engaged in gently tending the steed of the noble lady at his side.

"Long live the Emperor! Long live the Empress!" burst forth from the impressible crowd, as they discerned the Royal Sovereigns.

Henry bowed in graceful recognition of their

homage: but conveyed—by signs and gentle words to those who were nearest to him—that no earthly passions should obtrude now.

“Open, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in!” intoned the choristers: and the wide valves of the Lateran revolved back upon their hinges, and the procession entered.

“Parody! parody!” murmured the Friar. “What can be called a parody, if this be not? a parody on the unity of Christ’s Church; a parody upon the individualism of its power. There thou goest, Pope Clement,” he continued, bitterly,—“thou goest to St. Peter’s Chair, because its old occupant hath fled—though he still lives. Thither thou goest to curse him that hath ruled the nations; to reverse his edicts; to promulge laws in his very teeth. So be it. Hildebrand—thou murderer of my three brave boys!—‘because sentence hath not been executed speedily’ thou hast grown rampant—look to it! And then—and then—whence may this poor heart gain confidence? Whom can I believe? Thou—Hildebrand—sayest thou art infallible: what saith Guibert? Whom *am* I to believe?”

The Friar was reasoning thus—and his mood

* Note X.

T

had hitherto been calm and deliberative, though almost cynical—when his wan countenance lighted up with feeling. This took place the instant that he descried the young Baron Sigbert and the Lady Emmeline, as they rode side by side, and as he saw, or thought he saw, that the latter was wearing some bridal favours.

“What can this mean?” he asked himself, suddenly, as the sight brought him back to life practical. “Are the sorrows of these, my children, to have an end so fair and glorious?”

As quickly he left his pedestal, and, with his ordinary celerity of movement, he gained the Lateran. Little to him were the pomps and ceremonies of the enthronization of a Pope. That they were in rivalry to Hildebrand was all he cared for. But his deep, human, affections—affections which no long years of ascetic coldness had congealed—were now warm and motionful within his bosom. He knew that the son of an old brother-in-arms was on the eve of triumphing with his love. He knew, too, that the bride who, as her babe, had smiled upon the lap of his own sister, was now blushing beneath the looks of her future husband: still he felt as if a mystery was overhanging him. For “how,” thought he,

“can such strange events bear unison—the consecration of a Pope, and the marriage of a soldier?”

This strange conjunction, however, neither was to be, neither was it dreamt of, save in the now perturbed visions of the Monk. Years on years had he spent in varied efforts to supplant Hildebrand—of whom he never thought but as clothed with the gore of his dying wife and children: and exciting though was the moment when he saw the gratification of his wish and purpose, still he held his intellect in clearness. But the poor widower—the childless father—no sooner caught the idea that the brave young son of his friend and his own niece might be at their nuptials, than his head became confused; he lost sight of its incongruity with the consecration of a Pontiff, and with revenge on the one hand, and human affection on the other, still continuing insatiate,—he would have combined their triumph.

But it was not to be; neither, as we have said, had it been dreamt of by either the principals themselves or by their friends.

And for the first time, since the Friar came before us, his countenance—that had uniformly

been strung up to vigour and determination—suddenly relaxed into indecisive weakness. He drew his cowl over his head, and was lost in the crowds that retreated from the Lateran, upon the conclusion of the service.

CHAPTER VII.

“ The cause exacts it, and I may not shrink,
That cause which makes of all this mortal world
But one vast engine for its purposes,
And still works on, and pauses not, nor spares,
Though every strained and shrieking cable there
Is spun of human fibre.”

W. SMITH.

THE phantom-scene which Hildebrand's conscience had conjured had left him in the strangest moral and intellectual disorder. After a night passed, bedless, sleepless, when the cold grey of the morning dawned upon him, cold though it was, he welcomed it as a refuge. For many a fact in human life has told us, that there are occasions in which a terrible self-consciousness seeks for light and its activities, not for darkness and its repose, as a relief.

“ At least,” so he said to himself, “ my cardinals and priests, and men about me,—at least the strife and war of day,—will keep off these fierce

visitants ! Surely," he continued (and with so low a device did he try to overreach his troubled heart), " surely, the bare fact that they present themselves in the shroud of darkness may well prove that they are no angels from ' the Father of lights.' "

" Enter !" said the encaged Pontiff, as one firm knock at his chamber-door asked admission.

" May it please your Holiness ! I have dared to intrude upon your privacy.—For the whole Roman people are now flocking to the Lateran, and one of my scouts brings word that there, this morning, the Emperor's protégé is to be enthroned in rival of your Holiness," said Malatesta, the commander of the Pontiff's body-guard. " Shall we," he earnestly demanded, " make some sudden sortie, and prevent the sacrilege ?"

Hildebrand was on the eve of starting from his seat, and, at any other time, would have stood erect—would have uttered his brief, pointed orders ; but as he made the effort the phantoms passed again before his eyes. True it is, that the twilight dimmed their outlines, and their forms were less terrifying to his spirit. That it was difficult for him to identify their features was some small comfort. But each, as it passed,

cried into his ears, "The voice of blood crieth to thee from the ground!" and he sank down breathless, helpless, upon his chair.

"The Holy Father must be ill!" exclaimed the soldier; and he rushed out for help.

We will not speak of the days and weeks that passed, during which Hildebrand, while holding out the Castle of St. Angelo against the forces of the Emperor, underwent such repeated paroxysms,—yet, nevertheless, surmounted them and shewed vigorous fight.

Six weeks of the most fretting imprisonment had elapsed, when, one day, his friend Desiderius scaled the walls, and announced to him that Robert Guiscard was approaching, and with a powerful army, for his deliverance.

"God is a very present help in time of trouble," was all that the anxious Pontiff could return in answer.

What were the Pope's commands, from such sudden hope; what were his eager feelings, alternating between confidence and alarm, as news came to him, at one hour, of the Emperor's precipitate retreat; at another, of Robert Guiscard's siege of the Christian metropolis;—what he did, how he walked, what he said, during this his

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captivity, we may imagine somewhat : as facts we can mention none. This, however, we can say, that, if ever a human mind can, by supposition, hold within itself the elements of Divine Truth, as forms of knowledge, and can combine them with feelings and purposes, wishes and intentions, ambitious desires and ambitious plans of action ; and, further, if it can, regardless of all the moral distinctions that appertain to the latter, force them as aids or supplementaries into the service of the other ; if ever a human mind hath power to make intellectual certainties of thought coalesce with the ambiguous, or self-flattering prejudices of moral emotion—that mind was Pope Gregory's. He was great in the vision of his eye—that we allow—for its comprehension embraced all earth ; but the humours which floated around that eye were, some of them, the essence of gall, others that of henbane. And thence it followed, that though proud and impracticable when control was attempted upon his judgment, he withdrew himself to his solitary chamber, in order to ply, in all serpent-like variations, the devices and casuistries of his character : AND HILDEBRAND WAS THE REAL FOUNDER OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DYNASTY !

His most favoured passion—that of revenge upon the Emperor Henry—had been in the throes of a crucifixion for some weeks ; for it had been too surely told him that the Great Monarch of the West had been crowned at the Lateran,—nay more, that he had been so amid the honest homages of the Roman people as well as among the feudal plaudits of the greatest of the Teuton and Lombard nobles ; nay, still farther, that, amid all this pomp and circumstance, his rival, Pope Clement III., had been consecrated, and enthroned.

Still, the old, withered Pontiff would not succumb. Conscience assailed him, yet he bent not : the morning after found him as pale and worn, but as resolute as ever. Visions of the night had scared him, but when the sun dawned he walked among the orange trees of his private garden, and scanned their growth of arm, and the number and the freshness of their new flowers. At the sound of the besiegers' catapults, as their stones shivered upon the impregnable walls of St. Angelo, he smiled. Nevertheless, not one step of an attendant, or, what was more to him, not one quick approach of a messenger, struck upon his ear unheeded.

He was walking, and in this mood, when there was announced to him that the Emperor Henry had suddenly left the city, with the greater portion of his troops, and that Robert Guiscard had rushed to his rescue.

“ The hand of God ! the hand of God ! ” exclaimed the Pontiff.

“ He who trusteth on Egypt, trusteth upon a broken reed, or upon a sword that shall pierce him,” echoed in the gardens.

“ Merciful God ! ” cried Hildebrand, among many affrighted followers. “ Am I, thy Vicar, to be thus disturbed ? ”

“ Hildebrand ! ” the echo said, “ ‘ thy fine gold hath become dross, and thy glory hath departed. ’ ”

The entire company shuddered, and would fain have left, but the Pope’s commanding language stayed them.

“ Bear,” said he, compressing his emotions, “ bear to the Lord Guiscard my most grateful thanks, Malatesta, and obtain from him his purposes.”

But an uncereemonious hand touched his consecrated shoulder, and he turned upon the profane being, to smite him with an anathema that

might have issued, from the Holy of Holies, upon the sacrilegious Antiochus.

“Nay, nay, your Holiness,” exclaimed a plain but fierce-spoken soldier, “a truce to all feelings about Mother Church; for the nonce at least. Let me answer for my sacrilege, anon.”

This was the great Robert Guiscard, the Norman Duke of Apulia; of whose forces Hildebrand had eagerly availed himself, although he knew them to be composed, in great part, of those Saracens against whom he had vowed, in the name of Christ, an interminable war. Yet what cared he, unscrupulous as he was, though the crescent-moon waxed large, even to the full, so that he might but keep safe in his orbit as “the Sun of Righteousness?”

“Be it so,” returned the Pontiff; and never had he felt so much difficulty in maintaining his long-practised dissimulation. “Be it so, Duke Guiscard; but wherefore hast thou come hither, whilst thy soldiers need thy presence amongst themselves?”

“To bear thine Holiness to a spot more befitting to thy sanctity; and to crave thy blessing upon my men, for they have fought most manfully. And now let us to the Lateran!” replied the Duke.

“Our best blessing thou and thy host have

had already, and shall still have," was the Pope's fervid answer.

"The blessing of the Cross upon the Crescent! but all things are lawful to the Holy Father," murmured a voice behind the Pontiff.

There was imminent danger that these bold words, cutting as they must have been to both the Pope and his warrior champion, would awaken passions the most terrible. Indeed, the moist drops upon the wan forehead of the Pontiff, and the flash of the Duke's eye, were omens of a terrific thunder-storm. But time pressed, and whilst Hildebrand could only gasp, such was his terror, the Duke Guiscard broke the silence.

"Your Holiness must not heed this mutiny. Pray hasten to the procession of your triumph."

" 'Blessed is he that considereth the poor, the Lord shall deliver him in time of trouble,' " faintly rejoined the Pope.

"Not so poor either," returned the Duke, with a meaning smile, "*if* my poor soldiers have spoken truly."

The sagacious Hildebrand was, for once in his life, check-mated by the sudden and almost unreflecting move of a soldier. He lost, utterly lost, his self-possession, when, trembling with rage and apprehension, he exclaimed—

“Then, Count Guiscard, you have dared to sack our churches!”

“Nay, not so, your Holiness”—and the rough Norman smiled more grimly—“my poor followers have but laid their hands upon some few chalices and crosiers. It may be, that, in their haste, sundry jewels have been torn from their marble wearers. But of all this, we will, also, speak anon. Let us to the Lateran,”

The soul of the great Gregory was smitten to the earth. He who had so long commanded the more than feudal homage of all Europe; had been worn with mortification at the successes of his bitterest foe; had been unnerved by the unknown voice, which, like the bay of the slot-hound, followed him and disturbed every retreat; had been, at last, unceremoniously treated by Duke Guiscard, whom he had played with and cajoled as one of his own creatures;—he, we say, was now so unmanned that he left himself at the disposal of others.

The triumphant Duke led him, with all due ceremony and honour, from St. Angelo to the Lateran. But the shouts of the Norman soldiery failed to rouse him from his humiliating trance. Once—only once—the old man opened his eyes,

during his progress; and then the meaning of his eyes—they had become lurid—terrified the spectators. It was when the barbaric cymbals of the Moslems burst upon him. Then he looked around him, and, whilst shuddering at the cold, indignant crowd of his own people, who were near his person, and at the fierce Paynim who were in the distance, he heard again the voice that had given him such anguish, asking—

“What concord hath Christ with Belial? or he that believeth with an Infidel?”

Under the woe of these inner conflicts he gained the Lateran, that Lateran which his rival Clement III. had occupied so lately.

CHAPTER VIII.

“ Once more we look, and all is still as night,
All desolate ! Groves, temples, palaces,
Swept from the sight ; and nothing visible,
Amid the sulphurous vapours that exhale
As from a land accurst, save here and there
An empty tomb, a fragment like the limb
Of some dismembered giant.”

ROGERS' ITALY.

It is not for us to speculate upon what miseries of heart Hildebrand endured for two days, although he found himself re-enthroned at the Lateran. It was impossible for him to repel the stings of conscience. He knew, too clearly for his peace of spirit, that he had betrayed the uniqueness of his great ecclesiastical life ; for he, who had been so fierce a vindicator of the Church, as to all its pretended forms of purity and law, had, at last, entered on an alliance with the Infidels of Mecca. He knew, that if his tiara should, thenceforth, sit firmly upon his brows, it would be, chiefly,

because Mahomet had re-crowned him. And his proud soul sickened at the thought; we will believe, moreover, that a higher and a better order of sorrow transpierced him. Then, again, he could not shut his eyes to the frigid reception that had greeted him on his passage from St. Angelo to the Lateran. Heretofore, it had been one of his most innocent joys to traverse the streets of his Holy City, and to meet with welcomes, blessings, thanksgivings, prayers, which, from their number and their unaffected love, compensated him for all the odium, and disgust, and disallowance that arrived to him from all Europe.

On the second night, after his return to the Lateran, he was seated in his private chamber, alone, and most moodily scanning his position. His memory had been striving to recall, from Holy Scripture, cases analogous to his own. He was thinking of David and Hezekiah, aiming to draw, from any circumstances in their lives, aught that might save him from the cold thought that no others had been isolated as was he. It was his wont, as well as that of other Popes, to adopt language which was the original and intransferable right of our Blessed Lord: and at this

moment, scorning the parallels abovementioned, he was saying to himself, "And yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me."

"The City, may it please your Holiness, is in flames—it is in flames, your Holiness!" cried Malatesta, suddenly bursting into the room.

"Then quench them," gloomily answered Hildebrand; and both strength and vivacity had so gone from him, that he said no more.

"Quench them! your Holiness?" asked the officer, "and how?"

"Dost thou ask how?" fretfully returned the Pope. "Is not Duke Robert Guiscard our friend and our deliverer?"

"That he may be," rejoined Malatesta. "But if he be, his light can be no gentle one. The whole city, your Holiness, is in flames. And my men tell me that the people are in conflict with the Duke."

"My people in conflict with the Duke? Impossible!" laughed the Pontiff. "Why, he came hither to their rescue."

"May I pray your Holiness to look out upon the city?" asked the officer, coldly.

In the Vatican, and in a painting by the great Raphael of another but similar scene, you may

still see depicted groups of affrighted fugitives from flames that had devouringly played around their houses; you may see a modern Æneas bearing his father upon his shoulders, whilst the old man is looking with anxious, unselfish care upon his grand-child; you may see husbands, with arms raised aloft, aiming to catch their little ones whom the self-sacrificing mothers have sought after among the burning rafters of their poor homesteads; you may see hordes of women and shrieking children at the lower footsteps of the Vatican, imploring help from him who had assumed the powers and the titles of the God Omnipotent; you may see, nearer to the frontage of the palace of God's Vicar, old men, old women, imploring his *All-Mightiness* to interpose.

But raise your eyes aloft, and you will see this man, who for years hath, not simply as the holder of Christ's Vicariate, used high and domineering words, but who hath challenged to himself, as his own prerogative, all power both in heaven and on earth,—him you will see aghast at a fire which had less pretension than that of a purgatory, the waves and billows of which he had declared to be at his command.

The Pope Hildebrand had taken his stand at

a balcony, whence he saw the duplicate reality of this great painting. He shuddered, for he had somewhat, though but little, of the human within his bosom.

“My children, ‘though ye walk through the fires, ye shall not be burned; neither shall the flames kindle on ye,’” exclaimed the Pontiff, raising his pastoral hand in the attitude of a benediction; but it trembled, for conscience made its smallest finger quiver.

Could philosophy, though ordinarily so cold and passionless, have calmly dissected the horrors of self-reproach that then pierced and deposited their stings in the soul of Hildebrand? Physical anatomy may speculate upon every vein of the human body; may ascertain, with her knife, the directions and the implications of every muscle; may examine into the secretions and functions of every gland. This she may do with her hand still steady, and her eye still unmoistened. But could philosophy, however stoical, have looked into the soul of the Pontiff without being moved? Heretofore he had cursed every one that had hesitated on submission to his sway. He had cursed individuals in private life, and had driven them, in numbers, to starvation. He had cursed

priests and potentates, denuding the former of their parishes or sees, and the latter of their broad lands and provinces. He had cursed Sovereigns, and had drawn a pall of mourning over the dais of each throne. But, in the meantime, he had been retained in his self-complacency by the personal devotion of his Roman subjects. What mattered it to him that the Councils of Mentz and Brixen charged him with crimes and cruelties, so long as every voice, in his own immediate neighbourhood, was one of affectionate adulation ; so long as every eye, that met his own, uttered feelings of reverence and love.

But now came an hour of moral retribution, to bear which this former quietude had unfitted him. He was looking down upon the flames, and you might have seen the Pope's face so pallid, that even the heat of the burning houses could not redden it. And then, you might have given another look, and its livid, corpse-like hue would have added to the terror of the conflagration.

The cause of this new phase of feeling was the following :

“ Curses—the deepest curses—on the head of Hildebrand !” shouted the almost ubiquitous Friar. “ Curses on him, my men,” he continued,

while stimulating a large mass of beings who were following him to combat against Duke Robert Guiscard and his Norman and Saracenic forces.

“Hath not yon false Pontiff,”—and he pointed to the balcony where the Pope was standing,—“hath he not brought Infidel Paynims to besiege the Holy City? Hath he not,—he, forsooth, who has been preaching to ye a crusade against the followers of Mahmoud? Look, brethren, at yon turbans and the crescents which they carry, and then look, look at the Cross which Hildebrand hath made to wave amongst them.* Will ye be bridesmen to such apostate nuptials?”

“The Cross—the Cross to the rescue!” rose as a scream of fury from the populace; and they stayed their rush, only to turn towards the Pontiff and with clenched fists or with brandished weapons to dare and threaten him.

“Renegade Priest of the most High God!” cried one of them, and in frantic fury, “thou hast sought aid from the Moslem, rather than from Christ, hast thou?”

“Aye! and against thine own children, Holy Parricide!” exclaimed another.

* Note Z.

The hue of the Pope's face kept its ground against any blush of indignation, for conscience told him that, for his own insane ambition, he had even welcomed aid from the false Prophet of his God.

Once only did he burst forth from the coils of the serpent that was within him. It was when a third speaker shouted, in a tone of mischief—

“Cast thy line, Holy Fisherman! and be sure that thy bait be a right royal one. But throw us the crown of Cæsar. At least it will divert thee.”

The vast crowd grinned horribly at this too well-founded sarcasm, and the Pontiff lost his self-command.

“Begone, blasphemer! and . . .

The Pontiff's fury was turned suddenly, for many and piercing shrieks flew, as daggers, upon his bosom.

“The Infidels have broken up the convents, and our holy nuns are made foul prey of,” gasped one messenger.

“Whole streets and houses are being sacked, and their inmates are weltering in their blood,” exclaimed a second one, a minute after.

“Shall we receive good at the hands of the

Lord, and shall we not receive evil?" asked the Pontiff—while he thought of the Patriarch Job; of his cumulative afflictions; of his piety.

"The Sacristies are all ransacked, most Holy Father! our robes are now on the shoulders of the Saracen; the Paynim are drinking water from our sacred cups; they are hurling torches upon the fanes of Christ!" cried a third.

Hildebrand might have borne himself right boldly, save for this last sad news. He had been apprized that nearly two thirds of Rome was falling beneath the conflagration. He had heard that the sisters of the Church were in the arms of the Infidel; that husbands were stifled in their gore; that widows and orphans were—the one in worse than widowhood, and the other in worse than want. These woes, however, were—in his view—but in the course of nature, or, the inevitable results of his holy policy as Christ's Vicar. But when he found that the churches were beset, that the insentient Cross and Crosier, the Stole and Scapular, the Pyx and Chalice;—above all, that the treasure-houses of his disciples were exposed to the ruffianage of his mercenaries—then, his sympathies awakened.

“ Oh ! stay, stay these ravages, good Duke Guiscard,” he asked imploringly of the grim Chieftain who had approached his side. “ Stay them, my Lord Duke ; ‘ the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.’ ”

“ Stay them ? then your Holiness must work again that miracle, of which the world speaketh, when, while the Emperor was using torches, thou didst say to the proud flames, ‘ Be still, and there was a calm.’ ”

“ And so thou—even thou—Robert Guiscard ; thou whom in our mercy we have taken back to the bosom of the Church—so thou canst taunt us ?” cried the Pontiff.

“ I taunt your Holiness !” rejoined the Duke. “ I insult you ! That indeed I might, at some wicked moment, could I hope to meet thee, on the morrow, and to test thy lance or sword. I taunt your Holiness !”

The Pontiff had lost his temper. Few will blame him, who have studied the trying ordeal through which he had been passing. Some there may be to condemn him ; but they are of that class whom consummate pride steels against even the humiliations of self-consciousness, or, whom

the habit of being degraded renders them insensible to an insult.

“Duke of Apulia! Duke of Apulia!”—and Pope Hildebrand’s face and voice reminded his followers of his majesty and command in olden times—“If thou stay not this fearful fire, and within an hour too; if I hear, when that hour hath struck, one cry from a convent, or one plaint from a house, or one moan from a child; and, further, if—what is more—I hear of one minister of God complaining at the sacrilege of thy troops, I will denounce upon thee—and it shall be irrevocable—Anathema Maranatha.”

“Then Rome may burn,” fiercely returned the Norman. “Holy Father!” he continued, in a warm tone, “Where are thy vaunted miracles? Thou hast claimed the power of working such. Thou allowest it to be said that thou hast wrought them. Work them now, I pray thee; for sooth to say—soldier though I am—I love not such ravages as these. Work thy miracles, your Holiness, for I long to hear of no more women ruined, no more homesteads scattered to the winds. My men may want some gold: let them have it, and some greater booty shall repay the Holy See.”

“Thou art beside thyself, my Son!” said Hildebrand, and then relapsed into silence. It was a sagacious move—and he took it—when he, thus, assumed that silence under the mask of offended dignity.

CHAPTER IX.

" 'Justice I love, iniquity I hate,
And therefore mine an exiled Martyr's fate.'
Alas ! had e'en th' approaching mortal hour
Not taught thee, that thy love through life was power ;
Thy hatred—all that could with thee contend ?
A Tyrant's reign was thine, an Outcast's end."

HELEN MACGREGOR.

POPE Hildebrand had repaired to his private rooms with feelings that approached to the inconceivable by ourselves. His vast knowledge of life, his experience as to the vicissitudes of fortune, chiefly his own moral presentiments, fermented within his spirit. That he was now in the Lateran and upon the Papal Chair solely through the good sword of an adventurer who had employed the scimitars of Mahmoud in defence of the Vicar of Christ Jesus ; and further, that he held this Papal Chair in the midst of a disaffected—nay—indignant people, all this made him feel that his great struggle was at a crisis.

"Can I abide here much longer?" he said to himself.

"Yea, verily, abide here," answered a sardonic voice. "Abide here, your Holiness, and thou shalt have what thou listest—praises, blessings, vows—thy cup shall run over. Thy beautiful, thine unscathed city implores thee to come forth and acknowledge her thanksgivings."

Hildebrand rung his silver bell most fiercely, and, on the entrance of a Chamberlain, he commanded in words and with a quickness that were unusual to him—

"Order our escort for the morrow, early; and prepare relays for Salerno."

The Chamberlain bowed and retired, wondering.

"Art thou here, good Bruno? art thou here?" he asked, looking around the room for his Secretary.

He listened, but there was no answer. He listened again—expecting, yea (so acutely does a wicked heart dread silence), hoping for even the response of his tormentor.

He listened still, but there was no answer.

"Oh! God!" he cried, "hath the very secretary of my words, the deposit of my thoughts, deserted me?"

“What companionship didst thou leave to the Emperor, at Spires?” returned the voice.

“Countess Matilda—Countess Matilda—where art thou, now that thy Holy Father is in woe?”

“Look at yon bags of gold, and they will tell your Holiness of her fidelity,” returned the voice.

“Ah! that accursed voice!” murmured Hildebrand. “Still, still,” continued he, “there may be truth in it.”

On the morrow morning he left Rome to seek refuge at Salerno, where stood one of Robert Guiscard’s best fortified castles. So great was the indignation of the Roman people at his admission of the Saracens;—such was their wrath at the cruelties which his avowed defenders, under Duke Robert, had perpetrated in their midst; and so devoted were they to the milder sway of the Emperor Henry, that the continuance of Pope Hildebrand within the bounds of his own favoured city was unsafe.

He fled, therefore; and having, for awhile, remained at Monte Cassino, with his fast friend Desiderius, the execrations of the inhabitants of even rural districts compelled him to move onward, and he realized his original purpose of retiring to Salerno.

Still his indomitable spirit proved true to him,

and he had not long gained his refuge before he summoned a fresh Council, and re-excommunicated the Emperor Henry. Fair emblem, how the moment of Rome's greatest physical weakness is the moment of her greatest spiritual assumption !

We have said that Hildebrand repronounced the sentence of excommunication upon the Emperor Henry. And that he did so, in the midst of misfortunes, may be urged by some mediæval students as a proof of his unswerving fidelity to his mission. We presume to think far otherwise. Our observation of human nature suggests to us—we not being guided by any prepossessions either for or against Gregory the Seventh—that the last outbreak of his life might just as probably have been the closing, though weak, ebullition of a spirit whom revenge had sustained in its vigour, but which our God of Justice and of Mercy had visited with disappointment.

The efforts that Hildebrand had put forth at that council, were too much for his exhausted frame.

He retired from it, but he retired to die. As he did, he exclaimed—raising his eyes to heaven—“ I am mounting thitherward : and with “ supplications the most fervent will I com-

“mend your cause to the goodness of the Almighty.”

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“The Lord Sigbert, from Germany, asks an audience with your Holiness,” said a chamberlain; “but I have presumed to tell him that my Holy Master is too unwell to give him it.”

“Unwell! unwell! Didst thou, Ciocco, use that as an excuse? Admit him instantiy!” replied the Pontiff.

It will be recollected that the Baron Sigbert had had the happy fortune to rescue his betrothed—the Lady Emmeline—at the moment when Pope Gregory’s vindictiveness, even in minutiae, had brought her to the altar for the purpose of making her profession as a Nun. It will be recollected likewise, that—after this rescue—the affianced bride had allowed herself to appear in public with her future lord, thus publicly cancelling whatsoever rumours might have been circulated about their separation.

There were many reasons why, in the midst of conflict and surrounded with the strifes of ecclesiastics, their marriage was postponed. And, indeed, the months of training and of thought to

which the fair bride had recently submitted, made her hesitate so long as she knew that Sigbert was an excommunicate. No arguments,—drawn though they were from the cruel character and the questionable position of Pope Hildebrand,—no arguments of any kind, enforced though they were by the gentle but sometimes indignant words of the Empress Bertha, could persuade her. And it followed that the young Noble, notwithstanding his reverence for the Anti-Pope, Clement III., in his eagerness to obtain her hand determined to wring, if possible, his own absolution from the great persecutor.

With this intent he had come to Salerno.

The exiled Pope was so weak that he had to seek support from cushions, and when the young noble approached his chair, the exhaustion of the old man prevented his giving any other recognition save that of his expressive eye.

“Dost thou bring us thy false Emperor’s submission unto Christ?” he asked, in a weak tone,—looking, nevertheless, with a glance of unimpaired energy.

“I bear,” reverently returned Sigbert, “no missives from my Sovereign, of any kind whatever.”

"Then, wherefore comest thou into the dying chamber of God's Vicar?" demanded Hildebrand.

"Perchance thou art sent hither to count the throes of our last agony, to note them down, to retail them to thy rebel master, and make them future food for the jests of the ungodly!"

"God forbid!" exclaimed Sigbert. "I am a knight of the Roman Empire,—that alone shields me from the suspicion of your Holiness."

"Knight—knights of the Empire!" answered the Pope, in grim sarcasm. "Your blades are, in truth, pure and undefiled; your mantles are white, like the driven snow; your spurs know no dishonour. Oh, no!—whom of your number could I find ready to do foul deed to the Church that bare ye?"

"Pardon me, your Holiness! My obtrusion on your privacy was one of peace; and yet, sooth to say, the patience of a soldier is but scant."

"Then do thy devoir as a knight, Sir Sigbert, and insult, or more, an aged man at the hour of his death. Thine Emperor will do thee the greater honour," rejoined the Pope.

"Your Holiness is much mistaken, may I presume to say," rejoined the Lord Sigbert. "I came hither with an object that is purely personal

to myself. I am but a frank soldier, and the Holy Father will pardon the directness of my prayer."

"Say on, Sir Knight!" returned the Pontiff.

"Then suffer me reverently to state my suit, most Holy Father! I am all but wedded to a noble lady, and thy ban upon me—one of the Emperor's soldiers—stands between us. I have wended my way hither in order to implore your Holiness to retract it."

"Did the false Henry authorise thee to make this prayer? And what saith that antichrist—Guibert—whom thou hast called Clement III.?" demanded Hildebrand, as he raised himself upon his elbows.

"The one—may it please your Holiness—is my Royal Master, and I have never dared to submit to his imperial sympathy my sorrows. The other is my more than father, and I bethought me that it was best to leave him in ignorance of this my pilgrimage," returned the Count.

"Thou wast wise beyond thy years!" said Gregory, smiling: "but whence hast thou gathered hopes about thy prayer, having it thus unsustained?"

"Barely, solely, upon the nature and the dic-

tates of this hour, may it please your Holiness !” was the answer.

“ And so thou dost dream, young man !” returned the dying Pontiff, “ that—that—death—Oh ! my God, this is death—that death can terrify Christ’s Vicar into inconsistency ?”

“ I retire, your Holiness !” said Sigbert. “ Had I but dreamt of your sacred sufferings, I should have been profane in this intrusion.”

“ Hildebrand ! Abbot of Clugny ! thou oft-welcomed guest of thine ancient friend, Count Wifroy !—Hildebrand ! thou who hast, by thy borrowed forces, razed our castles, defamed our women, murdered our children, set the flames and furies of war to revel in broad Europe, denounced our princes, dissolved the bonds of our allegiance ;—Hildebrand ! thou who hast for thy false church-principles made thine usurped territory an Aceldama ;—Hildebrand ! hear the prayer of this youth ! The thought, that thou didst grant it, may whisper comfort to a soul which if it be not troubled, should be.”

“ Who speaks ? Who speaks ?” cried the Pope, in a plaintive tone. His eyes were becoming powerless. He was trembling. Count Sigbert had begun to withdraw in horror, and the .

room was about to be refilled by those attendants who had retired during the above interview.

But before they came, a Friar—cold, and attenuated, and fierce—approached the couch of the consecrated sufferer.

“Thou dost demand,” he cried, “‘who speaks?’ *I speak!*” continued he. “I, Lord Wifroy, speak to thee. Forgive *thy* Sovereign; forgive the Royal Henry; forgive his faithful vassals; recall thy curses from him and them, and I will be deaf to the voices of my children’s blood against thee. Yea, more; I will prefer masses for thy soul till my tongue cleaveth to my mouth.”

“That will I never!” groaned the Pontiff. And looking around—his sight gradually becoming dim—he discerned Count Sigbert, and, almost gasping, added, “Young Lord! I absolve thyself; but but”

He could add no more.

The Pontiff continued in a state of collapsed unconsciousness for three days. Long and dreary though was their tendance, the Cardinals, the Bishops, the Abbots, the Priests, that had followed him to his solitude, failed not in waiting.

They caught the first returning gleam of mental

life upon his brow ; and his Confessor drew close to the dying pallet.

“ Holy Father !” he whispered, “ give me thy counsels to the Church ; advise thy flock who shall be its shepherd when we have lost thy crook ?”

The Cardinals, the Bishops, the Abbots, the Priests,—all bent their heads and ears forward for the answer.

“ Desi—Desi—Desiderius !” the Pope strove to mutter forth, “ or Otho—or—or—Hugo !” and he relapsed again.

The blank visages of the ecclesiastics who were around his bed too sadly betrayed their selfishness.

But a few moments passed, and the dying man’s intellect seemed to be again awake.

“ Will your Holiness suffer me to minister our last sad office ?” asked the weeping Confessor.

“ Hasten—hasten—brother !” was the answer.

“ And thou diest in peace with all men, most Holy Father ?” the Priest interrogated,—waiting for this last act of soul self-cleansing which the Church demanded.

The viaticum was not near enough, or Hildebrand would have seized and taken it in silence.

But he was still intelligent enough to see that not only was the sacrament beyond his reach, but that numerous observers were standing round him.

By an almost superhuman effort he gathered up his declining forces.

“What saidst thou, brother?” he murmured forth.

“Doth your Holiness die in peace with all men?” was the answer—whispered gently.

Then followed a scene that, at the time, made all hearers shudder; that, in after days, made them wish for some Lethæan waters; that—transmitted down to us, as it is, by Gregory’s own friends—drives us aghast from the bare conception of it. Then followed a scene, when a man on the couch of death; a man with accumulated sins upon his soul; a man with memories thick and full of broken hearts, of piercing cries, of curses loud and deep—all of which he knew to have been of his own creation; a man who had evoked every emotion of the human heart—pride, rage, love, honour, revenge—against himself and against his holy office; the man who had made himself an Ishmael against kings and princes, against nobles and esquires, against merchants

and serfs ; this MAN, when called upon by Christ's Minister to forgive his enemies, ere he took the last pledge of the Holy Church for his future safety, arose stoutly from his couch, and said,—

“With the exception of Henry, styled by his followers the King ; of Guibert, the usurping claimant of the Roman See ; and of those who, by advice or assistance, favour their evil and ungodly views, I absolve and bless all men, who unfeignedly believe me to possess this power, as the representative of St. Peter and St. Paul. I have loved justice and hated iniquity : therefore I die an exile !”

Such were the last words of the great Hildebrand. Such was the dying spirit of him, without whom the Roman Papacy would, to all human probability, have never put forth or realized her temporal assumptions. And it will be well for us to bear in mind, that, upon the principle of his Infallibility, his successors welcome, as their heritage, the virtue of implacableness.

Lest there should be disappointment among our readers as to the fates of the Lady Emmeline

and Count Sigbert, we beg leave to add that Pope Clement III. redeemed his pledge to the latter, and bound them in matrimony, the moment that they sought it. The Count had no sooner seen his bride safely installed in the halls of his ancestors, than he was called forth to fields of battle, in support of his Sovereign; at first, against that Sovereign's own subjects, and afterwards, alas! against that Sovereign's own sons.

As if the mantle of the faithful Ranulph had fallen upon him, he continued steadfast to his master to the last.

It was on an autumn evening in the year of our Lord 1106, that the whole town of Liege came forth to attend the obsequies of the great Henry IV. They came forth—urged by the universal love and gratitude of both rich and poor. In all matters that were free from the ambiguous movements of state-policy, he had in latter days been gentle, and just, and generous. “The poor,” says one of his biographers, “felt his generosity, admired his intrepidity, and were melted by the clemency which he shewed on occasions which, to most monarchs, would have seemed to call for the unmitigated rigour of justice. Recent events, too, had thrown around him

a majesty of suffering which could scarcely appeal in vain to the noble feelings of our nature. From many parts, therefore, did widows, children, and the poor—objects of his charity or protection—flock to the scene of his death, to pour their lamentation over his remains. Approaching the spot where the body lay, they watered it with copious tears, covered the large and once nervous hands with kisses, and could scarce be torn from the lifeless frame by those whose duty it was to bear it to the tomb.”*

All this manifestation of the religion of humanity took place but a few days after the Archbishop Rothard had crowned the parricide Henry V., with the prayer, “that if he should not comport himself as a righteous governor, and as the defender of God’s Church, his fate might resemble his father’s.” The Church of Rome has had large experience in thus availing itself of sin.

Only a few days had passed since the interment of the great Emperor, when a body of ecclesiastics approached the cemetery, prepared with book and candle.

* Vita Henrici ap. Urstis. Bowden, ii. 354.

“ Remove from Holy ground,” exclaimed Archbishop Rothald, “ remove the corpse of the accursed, and leave it on yon dunghill : let the elements of corruption find sympathy. Remove the excommunicate !”

The grave-diggers were approaching the sad tomb, when they and their ghostly masters were arrested by a scene around the grave.

A tall, still vigorous knight had bounded from his knees (he had been kneeling at the grave of his Sovereign) ; he had heard the brutal order ; he had unsheathed his sword ; and one moment more, and the Priests, who were as craven as they were intolerant and unforgiving, would have felt upon their backs, as they fled, that same brave sword that had cleft the skull of many a bold Moslem.

“ Hold ! Hold !” dear Egelbert, prayed a woman, whose ancient weeds showed the length and the fidelity of her womanhood. “ Hold, I pray thee. Doth thy Lord, my adored Ranulph, sleep less gently for their curses ? Sheathe thy brave sword, thou true-hearted friend. And let History bear witness—that, in death even, Ranulph and his Master were not divided.’

“Tear up, tear up the body of the excommunicate,” cried the Archbishop, “and let it rot above.”

“Brother ! brother !” said a Friar, whose great age scarcely allowed him to rise from the gravestone, “Yon corse may have committed sins innumerable, but the blessings and prayers of the poor followed it to the tomb. Its sins sprung from the incubation of thy Church ; its virtues, from the knowledge, little though it was, of God’s word that the excommunicate Count Ranulph taught it. Lord Archbishop ! the spirit hath gone to confront and accuse Hildebrand,—and should yonder dunghill yield up the body, its very form shall terrify thy guilty yet unfeeling self.” *

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These were the acts of the indivisible, immutable, unimproveable Roman Catholic Church !

* Note A a.

NOTES.

Note A. p. 59.

See *Mabillon*, Ann. Bened. Lib. lviii. No. 113; also, Leo Ostiens, in Chron. Casiniensi, ii. c. 89; also, Petrus Damiani Ep. in ann. 1058. No. 12.

Baronius gives the following epigrams, "de Papâ et Hildebrando" (Baronius, 1061).

"Papam rite colo, sed te prostratus adoro;
Tu facis hunc dominum, te facit ipse Deum."

And—

"Vivere vis Romæ, clara depromito voce:
Plus domino Papæ quam Domino parco Papæ."

Note B. p. 65.

In the tenth and eleventh of the "Dictates" of Pope Gregory VII., blasphemous as they appear, we shrink, with horror, from giving them a natural interpretation. We leave them to the advocates of a "non-natural" sense, humbly trusting in God that no fellow-man ever dared to employ them in any other. The "non-natural" one is bad enough, without even the fiercest malice wishing to insist that the original one was "natural."

Should this note awaken the opposition of any Roman Catholic critic, we beg leave to say, in all courtesy, that we know what may be his answer about these "Dictates," and, by all the laws of a kindly tournament, we lay down our glove.

Note C. p. 99.

See Edinburgh Review, April, 1845. Art. Hildebrand. Also, Greg. Ep. Lib. iv. Ep. 12. ad Germanos: "Tandem (Rex), ad oppidum Canusii, in quo morati sumus, cum paucis advenit, ibique per triduum ante portam deposito omni regio cultu miserabiliter, utpote discalceatus et laneis indutus, persistens, non prius cum multo fletu apostolicæ miserationis auxilium et consolationem implorare destitit, quam omnes qui ibi aderant, ad tantam pietatem et compassionis misericordiam movit, ut pro eo multis precibus et lachrymis intercedentes, omnes quidem insolitam nostræ mentis duritiam mirarentur, nonnulli vero in nobis non apostolicæ severitatis gravitatem, sed quasi tyrannicæ feritatis crudelitatem esse clamarent. Denique instantiâ compunctionis ejus, et tantâ omnium qui ibi aderant supplicatione devicti, tandem cum relaxato anathematis vinculo in communionis gratiam et sinum s. matris ecclesiæ recepimus."

Note D. p. 99.

See Dupin. Cent. xi. Cap. v.; also, J. F. Georgius, in imperatorum, etc. gravamina adversus sedem Romanam. Lips. 1725. p. 85. "... Quum Dominus Jesus Christus nos ad regnum, te autem non vocavit ad sacerdotium. Tu

enim his gradibus ascendisti : scilicet astutiâ pecuniam, pecuniâ favorem, favore ferrum, ferro sedem pacis, adisti, et de sede pacis pacem turbasti, etc."

Note E. p. 141.

"Gregory, while he was throwing all Europe into combustion by his violence and impostures, affected an anxious care for the purity of manners; and even the chaste pleasures of the marriage bed were inconsistent, in his opinion, with the sanctity of the sacerdotal character. He had issued a decree prohibiting the marriage of priests, excommunicating all clergymen who retained their wives, declaring such unlawful commerce to be fornication, and rendering it criminal in the laity to attend divine worship, when such profane priests officiated at the altar. This point was a great object in the politics of the Roman Pontiffs; and it cost them infinitely more pains to establish it than the propagation of any speculative absurdity which they had ever attempted to introduce. Many synods were summoned in different parts of Europe before it was finally settled; and it was then constantly remarked, that the younger clergymen complied cheerfully with the Pope's decrees in this particular, and that the chief reluctance appeared in those who were more advanced in years: an event so little consonant to man's general expectations, that it could not fail to be glossed on even in that bland and superstitious age. William allowed the Pope's Legate to assemble, in his absence, a synod at Winchester, in order to establish the celibacy of the clergy: but the Church of England could not yet be carried the whole

length expected. The synod was content with decreeing, that the Bishops should not thenceforth ordain any priests or deacons without exacting from them a promise of celibacy; but they enacted, that none, except those who belonged to collegiate or cathedral churches, should be obliged to separate from their wives."—Hume's Hist. of England, vol. i. chap. iv.

Note F. p. 124 and 152.

Transmundus, Abbot in the Convent Tremiti, had torn out the eyes of certain monks, and cut off the tongue of one of them, (*fuertant enim apud eum de rebellatione Insulæ à sociis insimulati*). His superior, Desiderius, Abbot of Cassino, indignant at such cruelty, had imposed on Transmundus a severe penance; when Hildebrand, at that time still a cardinal, happened to arrive. "*Ille ea, quæ Transmundus gesserat, omnimodis approbans, et nequaquam illum, hoc crudeliter, sed strenue ac digne in malignos homines fecisse confirmans . . .*"—See Chron. Gasin. iii. c. 27 (*Muratori Scriptt. Rev. Ital. Tom. iv. p. 436*).

Note G. p. 113.

The oath of Henry:—

"*Ego Henricus Rex de murmuratione et dissensione, quam nunc habent contra me Archiepiscopi at Episcopi, Duces, Comites, cæterique Principes regni Teutonicorum, et alii, qui eos in eâdem dissensiones causâ sequuntur, infra terminum, quam Dominus Papa Gregorius constituerit, aut justitiam secundum iudicium ejus, aut concor-*

diam secundum consilium ejus faciam. Item si idem Dominus Papa Gregorius ultra montes, seu ad alias partes terrarum ire voluerit, securus erit ex mei parte, &c.”—*Lambert. Schafn.* p. 417; also, *Bernold*, Const. ad ann. 1077.

Note H. p. 120.

See especially Gregor. lib. iv. Ep. 2, ad Herimannum Episc. Metensem, A. D. 1076.

Note I. p. 122.

See Gregor. lib. viii. Ep. 21. A. D. 1081.

Note J. p. 170.

See Sir Lytton Bulwer Lytton's Notes on "Harold," Vol. iii.

Note K. p. 189.

See Johannes Cassianus, coll. xvii. 8 seq., e. g. cap. 17. In the text, I have not availed myself of those edicts of the Jesuits, concerning Truth and Falsehood, which offer the fairest points of assault for the indignant attacks of truth-loving humanity. Bad as even the Parliament of Paris proclaimed them to be; subversive as they are of all social confidence; warranting, though they do, our profound, utter disallowance of the most solemn oaths that a Roman Catholic can take (for the Jesuits are the acknowledged ethical authorities of the Papal Church),—I have, nevertheless, for the sake of chronological consistency, omitted them.

The quotation, however, which, in the text, I have

translated from a very ancient Doctor, will reveal, even more dispassionately, the ethics of the Church of Rome concerning Truth and Falsehood.

P. 322, line 4.

We beseech the Roman Catholics to ponder over the difficulty which many of us feel, who, while eschewing the fierceness of religious bigotry, are unable, in social confidence, to accept their words, unless they give us reason to believe that they abhor and repudiate the doctrines of the Jesuits.

Note L. p. 206.

See Dacherii Spicileg. Edit. 2, t. iii. p. 413; also, Berengar. Epist. p. 23.

Note M. p. 211.

"Petra dedit Petro, Petrus diadema Rudolpho." Whether it be a fiction or no, that Hildebrand sent a crown, with this inscription, to Rudolph; it is certain that even the Pope's friends allowed it to pass current. And to the theologian, the distinction which is here made between "Petra" and "Petrus" is very significant. In this very Epigram a distinction is made between "Petra," or Christ—the Rock—and "Petrus," Peter, the Apostle.—See Sigbert. Gembl. ann. 1077.

Note N. p. 211.

See Chron. Ursperg. p. 172; also, Marian. Scot. Bernold. Const.

Note O. p. 212.

Theoderici, Episc. Virdun. epist. ad Gregorium VII.
A. D. 1080, p. 215.

Note P. p. 214.

J. F. Georgius, in imperatorum, etc. gravamina adversus
sedem Rom. Lips. 1725, 4to. p. 35.

Note Q. p. 218.

Urstisii Germaniæ Scriptores, p. 394; also, Udalric.
Babenberg. Codex Epist. N. clxiii.

Note R. p. 219.

“Constat summum pontificem à pio principe Constantino *Deum* appellatum.”—Pap. Nichol. Dist. 96.

“Tu es alter *Deus* in terris.”—Christoph. Marcel. in
Conc. Latera. sess. 4.

“Credere, *Dominum Deum nostrum* Papam non potuisse
statuere, prout statuit, hæreticum censeretur.”—Extravag.
Johan. 22. Paris, 1513.

“The Pope sustains Christ’s lieutenantship, not only
over things in heaven, over things in earth, and over things
in hell, but also over the angels, both the good and bad.”
—Extr. de Constitutionib. Stat. Canonum. Felinus.

“It is *idolatry* to disobey his commands.”—Greg. VII.,
Ep. iv. 2.

Note S. p. 228.

See Bernold. Const.

Note T. p. 252.

"Coronam cum justitiâ, si vellet, sin autem de Castello S. Angeli *per virgam* sibi demissam a Papâ reciperet."—Bernhold. Const.

Note U. p. 253.

Greg. Lib. ix. Ep. 21.

Note V. p. 257.

Greg. Lib. ix. Ep. 21.

Note W. p. 265.

Bernhold. Const. ut supra. Not. T.

Note X. p. 269.

Platina, the Roman Catholic Historian of the Popes, records twenty-seven Schisms, during each of which there were two, sometimes more, rival Popes.

Many a Roman Catholic Priest must still owe his orders to some one of these schismatic Pontiffs. How can he be sure he does not?

Many a Roman Catholic has received the Sacraments from some one Priest, thus schismatically ordained. How can he be satisfied of their virtue?

Note Y. p. 273.

See Ant. Pagi Critica in Baronium, tom. iii. ad an. 1075.
—Hen. Norris, Hist. Investiturarum, p. 39.

Note Z. p. 311.

See especially *Bernold Const.* ann. 1081, seq. Also the death of Gregory described by *Paul Bernold*, c. 108-110, according to whom his last words were : ‘ Dilexi justitiam et odivi iniquitatem, propterea morior in exilio.’

For a very different account, see *Sigbert*. Gembl. ad ann. 1085. “ In extremis positus, confessus est Deo et S. Petro et toti ecclesiæ, se valde peccasse in pastoralis curâ—et suadente Diabolo contra humanum genus odium et iram concitasse.”

Also, Udalric. Babenberg, Codex. N. cxlvi.

Note A a. p. 315.

See Dodechini *Continuatio Chronici Mariani Scoti*, ap. Pistorii R. G. Scriptores. Appendix.

Also, *Vita Henrici Imperatoris*, ap. Urstisii R. G. Scriptores.

THE END.

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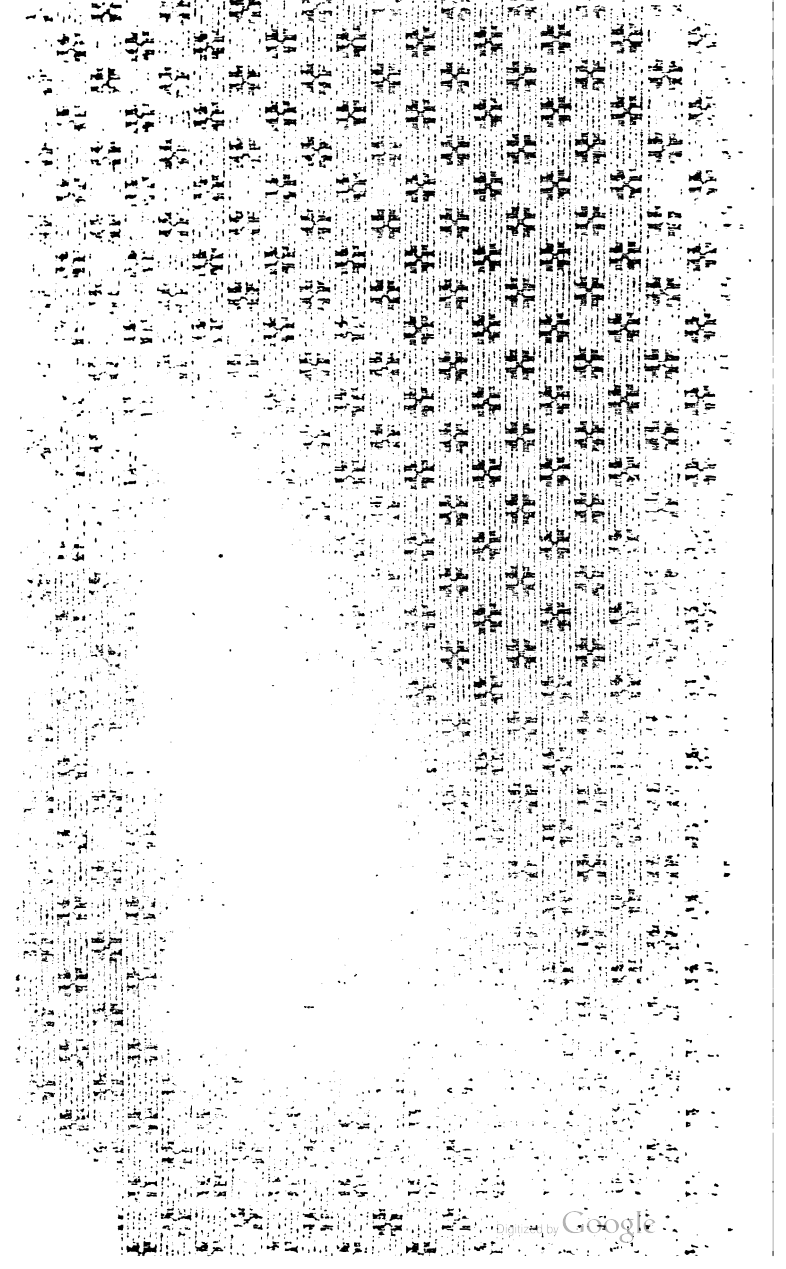
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